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LIFE OF MOTHER MARY OF
ST. EUPHRASIA PELLETIER



Héliog. Dujardin

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VERITABLE PORTRAIT
DU VÉN. JEAN EUDES

1601-1680

LIFE OF MOTHER
MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA
PELLETIER

FOUNDRESS AND FIRST SUPERIORESS-GENERAL
OF THE CONGREGATION OF OUR LADY
OF CHARITY OF THE GOOD
SHEPHERD OF ANGERS

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF THE
RIGHT REV. MONSIGNOR H. PASQUIER
DOMESTIC PRELATE TO HIS HOLINESS LEO XIII.
AND DEAN OF THE CATHOLIC FACULTY OF LETTERS OF ANGERS

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II.

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IN submission to the decree of the Holy Inquisition of the year 1625, explained and confirmed by Urban VIII. in 1631 and 1634, I ask that all contained in this book be taken in a purely human sense, and that the titles of blessed or saint, the terms miracles, prophecy, or revelation, wherever occurring, be understood in the sense in which it is customary to use them when speaking simply on human authority, and not on the authority of the Roman Catholic Church, or of the Holy Apostolic See, excepting only in such cases in which the same Holy See has pronounced judgment.

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LIFE OF THE REV. MOTHER PELLETIER

CHAPTER I

MUNICH—LONDON

Foundation at Munich—Louis I. of Bavaria—Mlle. von Müller's vocation—Reception of the religious at Haidhausen—Interest taken therein by Mother Pelletier—Visits by Court officials—Letters of Mother Pelletier—First demands for a foundation in England—Religious sent to England—Trials—Their recall.

THE Order of the Good Shepherd, while spreading its beneficent work over the world, was steadily increasing ; postulants in larger numbers and from more distant lands were admitted. These foreigners carried the name of the Community into their native countries, and made known its purpose and system, so that soon a twofold current began to flow, which grew with each succeeding year ; a current of colonies, which swarmed from Angers to establish new foundations, and of foreign postulants, who flocked to Angers to take the habit of the Good Shepherd.

It was through a foreign novice that God prepared the way for the first foundation in Germany. Mlle.

de Baligand, a young lady from Trêves, while in the Novitiate at Angers, was written to by her uncle, a gentleman of good social standing in Ratisbon, who wished for information about the Order. He was so well satisfied with her answer, that next he asked his Bishop to establish the Good Shepherd in Ratisbon, and this request was favourably received ; but no further steps could be taken without the King's leave for the introduction of a foreign order.

Louis I. of Bavaria had ascended the throne in 1825, and since then had welcomed the arrival of more than a hundred new Communities in his kingdom, and the Good Shepherd, with its high purposes of social utility, was not one he found it possible to exclude. Like his godfather, the unfortunate Louis XVI., he was a prince of gentle disposition. He loved France, Paris, the French people, and was always glad to show this affection, which perhaps had its origin in his admiration for the love of art and generous devotedness of the French nation. While still only heir-apparent, he began the magnificent art collections of the Pinacotheca and Glyptotheca, and when king, he made Munich the Athens of Germany. But not only through the arts did he seek the culture of his people ; he was no less anxious for their morality and happiness. He consulted the Bishops with a view to the founding of pious asylums, even as he had called painters and sculptors into council for the adornment of his palaces and museums.

From the first he liked the Constitutions of the Good Shepherd for the aim they keep in view, and for the self-sacrifice they take for granted in the religious subject to them, and he sent the Court Preacher, the Abbé Eberhard, to make inquiries about the Order. This ecclesiastic went to Strasburg, and was so thoroughly satisfied with everything he saw there at the Good Shepherd, that upon his report the King expressed a wish to see some of the religious. The Mother-Foundress chose Sister Mary of St. John of the Cross David (Superior at Nancy) and another Sister for this interview. The King received them most graciously, and it was decided between them that a house should be opened, but in the capital, Munich, where the work would have more scope, rather than at Ratisbon.

In order to report of her mission, Mother Mary of St. John of the Cross went to Angers, taking with her a Bavarian novice, Mlle. von Müller. This young lady, who belonged to a distinguished family, had never met with any Order which seemed exactly to meet the supernatural attractions and vocation of which she was conscious, until she heard of the Good Shepherd. Her father had given her an account of the work and object of the Institute, and agreed to her entering the Novitiate at Angers, on condition that she was to return to the house at Munich, as soon as it was founded; and to this Mother-General consented.

A few months later Abbé Eberhard, sent by his

royal master, arrived at Angers to escort the Sisters who were to found the house at Munich. The first to be sent were Sister Mary St. John of the Cross and Sister Mary of St. Helena. During the first fortnight in Munich, a charitable lady, Mme. Schoso, entertained them with much kindness. On the 7th July 1840 they went to their own house, but the final installation was not to take place until the 9th November.

The King, with the Archbishop's approval, gave the Congregation a house at Haidhausen, one of the suburbs. It was known as the Château of Freising, and was surrounded by spacious gardens. For the maintenance of the convent he made arrangements with Herr von Abel, one of his ministers. Fixed contributions were to be paid periodically, and the sale of the penitents' work was to eke out the funds. To meet the preliminary expenses, collections were to be made in the dioceses of Munich, Augsburg, Ratisbon, and Nassau.

The ceremony of installation, which was a kind of royal gala, was unlike anything the two poor religious had ever witnessed in France. It began with High Mass, sung by the Archbishop in the Haidhausen Parish Church, and a sermon by M. Eberhard, before a congregation composed of royal princesses, Ministers of State, and of all the most pious and distinguished citizens of Munich. At the conclusion of this function, the religious were escorted to their convent by a brilliant procession, which proceeded

along streets strewn with flowers, and past churches decked with garlands. A band of musicians headed the *cortège*, which was followed by some hundreds of little girls dressed in white. When they had reached the great hall of their new abode, the Dean, Chevalier von Oekel, in the Archbishop's name, made them an eloquent address, setting forth what was expected from this grain of mustard-seed, cast on the goodly soil of Bavaria "at the dawn of this new spring, the harbinger of all that was good and holy, under a king whose lofty vocation was, as it would seem, to lead other countries into the paths of true Christian civilisation."

The next speaker was the Minister of Finance, Count Seinsheim, who, in the King's name, explained his Majesty's reasons for asking the religious to come to Bavaria and for contributing to their support. He said their work was the remedy for one of the greatest evils of the age, an evil utterly inaccessible to merely human remedies. He then gave 10,000 florins towards the church of the convent, the King's gift from his privy purse. After these speeches, the Archbishop, although eighty-three years of age, blessed the house and gardens, and from that day until his death took the greatest interest in the Community.

Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia followed the progress of this foundation with the greatest interest, as she felt that the whole future of the Good Shepherd in Germany depended on its success. In December she sent thither three new religious: one of them was

Mlle. von Müller, in religion Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart, who went as Assistant, and who, by her virtues and wealth, contributed greatly to the prosperity of the house. But, brilliant as were these early days, they never made Mother Foundress forget that days of trial would visit her daughters, as is the case in every work done for God; and, indeed, they had much to suffer. In the first place, their house, only a kind of summer villa and long uninhabited, was but a sorry protection against the cold of winter. M. Eberhard, their Superior, who was superintending the building of some additions, was obliged to leave Munich owing to the animosity of the Protestants. The nuns themselves had to bear the trial of calumny. Even their friends lost heart at last, and advised them to give up Munich and return to France. It was then the Mother-Foundress, to encourage her daughters, wrote the following letter:—

“FROM OUR MONASTERY OF ANGERS,
July 8th, 1840.”

“‘They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.’”

“Poor and sorely-tried St. John of the Cross, you are indeed pierced with a sword of sorrow. But how pleasing to God is your soul! Both your dear letters are come to hand, and humanly speaking I am overwhelmed with grief, but Divine grace convinces me of your future success. Dearest child, forsake not your post; be steadfast in having nothing to do with the local government, with its degrading regulations and fair-

spoken conditions. Stay at Munich, strive to be free, and, if God so wills, poor ; but do not let yourselves be hampered, nor throw up your Divine mission, unless compelled. We bless God a thousand times for the holy dispositions and generous devotedness of our good Father Eberhard, whom we venerate and love ; do beg him not to forsake us, to make this work the object of his prayers and zealous care. London is opened to us with the most advantageous offers. What a harvest of souls ! Our Sisters have behaved admirably, but as the Bishop of Angers has obliged them to return, I tremble for the fate of this Divine mission. They made us a present of a large house, completely furnished. Our Sisters promised to come back, but the Catholics said this blow came upon them like a clap of thunder. They have brought with them six most promising young ladies. Would that you, in your bondage, could send us as many ! What a consolation it would be for us both !

“ Pray—we, too, will pray : your tears will bear fruits of grace for the whole Institute. You will see that by the Cross you will conquer. We have ever had to bear heavy ones, yet never has God or His glory failed to triumph. The increase of our work has kept pace with the severity of our trials. Munich promises an abundant harvest, hence does the enemy of all that is good come thither sowing his tares ; but the Lord of the harvest slumbers not ; let us, then, be of good heart. You are the two most isolated of our Institute ; but Jesus and Mary have you in

their keeping. St. Jerome learned Hebrew at the age of thirty; do you, then, dear child, learn German: they give you plenty of time for that. God will help you; try, then, to study it diligently. Our Sisters keep you in affectionate remembrance, and are writing to you. . . .

"I embrace my good little Sister Mary of St. Helena, and, in union with the most Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, am your much attached,

"MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA."

The King always protected the religious. He interfered once in their behalf when it was proposed to take part of their garden for the site of a hospital, and caused the scheme to be rejected in favour of the convent's rights. One day he came unexpectedly, very early in the morning, to examine for himself every detail of the house. As he visited the several offices, he was unable to restrain the expression of his admiration for the beautiful vocation of the Good Shepherd. Queen Mary also paid several visits. All through their trials it seemed as if God and the Blessed Virgin bestowed special encouragement on the religious. Instances occurred manifesting God's providential care, very like those which happened at Angers in the early days of the foundation, and the Mother-General rejoiced at seeing her daughters pass through paths she had herself once gone through. The Curé of the Augsburg Cathedral one day brought a donation of 9500 florins, the gift of an anonymous bene-

factress. Another day a peasant woman gave 5000 florins for the work—the whole, may be, of her life's savings. The little grain of mustard-seed, watered by the blessings of holy charity, could not lie buried in the ground. In 1844 there were 26 religious, 80 penitents, 70 Preservation children, and 50 boarders.

Mother Pelletier's letters to Mother St. John of the Cross, the first Superior of the house at Munich, follow one another in quick succession, full of affectionate counsel, and giving instances of God's goodness that might well inspire the faithful missionaries with courage. As for herself, the Foundress, seeing the graces shed on all her foundations, never could allow so much as a moment's doubt to enter her soul, and her very words brought courage to her daughters. Here are two of her letters to the Superior at Munich:—

“FROM OUR MONASTERY AT ANGERS,
July 23rd, 1840.

“‘The Lord has broken my bonds.’

“Like David, my very devoted daughter, you have to sing to God a song of praise. I and all our Sisters have just been singing it with you. We rejoice in God, who has broken the chains of your captivity. Dear Bavaria! restored once more to our prayers! What you tell us of both the convent and the church is delightful. Oh, how good God is! We have at last gained a footing on a shore, cold indeed, but solid for all that. You know that I am very fond of the Germans, but fonder still of you, my daughter, who

are such a help to me. How we shall pray for you and long that the Lord Himself may be the foundation-stone of this wondrous building, and that you yourself may live only by His Spirit and by His grace. Poor Sister St. John of the Cross! You are then really at Munich; at what a distance! I loved to have you near me! but *fiat*.

"Is it true that our good Father Eberhard is ill?

"Oh, how grieved we shall be! We shall pray much and get many prayers for him. Please give him our grateful respects. We are just beginning the fifteen Saturdays for Munich and for our dear German postulants. It is to be hoped they may arrive here before the 8th September. Monseigneur de Nantes is coming on that day to give the habit to our six dear English postulants, the first-fruits of that mysterious, miraculous London tree. Ah! my daughter, how Divine a mission that is! Our dear Mary Aimée of Jesus will give you all details of London, and will also tell you from us of the beautiful foundation started at Lyons. You are happy; you bless Jesus and Mary. I know your zeal. Our Germans are going on well. Oh, what help they will be to you some day!

"There are many things you ought to hear about our works. They are vast as the sea, but I have neither light nor strength in me; I am overwhelmed with work, graces, and crosses. But always God alone! He is our one great Treasure. Mgr. and M. Regnier continue to like Bavaria and help us about it, but they dread London as if it were a burn-

ing furnace. It is only the interest they take in us which makes them anxious; and, if God wills, He can inspire other feelings. Yesterday evening we received the approbation from *Rome*, where the work is favourably regarded. Pray for us all, my good, devoted daughter, whom, in the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, I love and cherish,

“MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA.”

“FROM OUR MONASTERY AT ANGERS,
November 12th, 1840.”

“‘My God, Thou art my life.’”

“Oh my daughter! truly is this life hidden in God, and strewn with crosses, even in that profound silence which I have been keeping, although I ever communed with you in prayer to God. Dear Bavaria, are we to found you, raise you up once more? We hope it will be so, because we have just gone through a way of the Cross which cannot be described. Only last Monday we appointed our beloved Sister Mary of the Visitation Superior at Sens; on Saturday she was carried to her grave. Dear, sweet child, long shall we mourn for her. God chose her as the victim for the great mission in London. Oh, what a Divine work! Yesterday at mid-day our Sisters left for the dear new colony; never was such a journey undertaken. They could not wear the habit, and, dressed in plain black, passed through the cloisters where we stood in silent ranks. We were all weeping, and felt impressed by love of the Institute, a love stronger by far than

death. I saw them in God making great conquests for the faith. I see great hosts of the elect coming to us. Rome, Munich, London. What missions! how many things do I see!

“But now let us think of Munich, where you have suffered so much. I suffer a kind of martyrdom for not having written to you sooner, and henceforth I will write at night, rather than not at all. Your letters are my delight. Ah! blessed be Jesus and Mary for the good news you send. What return can we make for such favours! and, oh! how beautiful this new flock will be! We will do all we can for it: but here is a cross. You know, dearest daughter, that Monseigneur had promised leave for Mary of the Sacred Heart, and now he has withdrawn it. Do not mention me at all, but set M. Eberhard to work: beg him to write himself to the good Bishop. I think he would do anything for the King of Bavaria’s sake. Mary of the Compassion is quite ready to start; she is an angel of virtue. She is now learning how to shape the work; she picks up everything quickly. What shall I say to you of Mary of the Sacred Heart? She is a chosen soul, a treasure, a source of blessing to the Institute. Mary of St. Teresa follows her closely. Oh, how I love the Germans. They are models of virtue: then their Divine vocations, their devotedness to the Institute. The Novitiate is going on as well as possible. Pray for your little children, who dearly love you.

“What gifts at Munich! How great the things,

my dear apostle, you are to achieve! The details of the dear monastery, your beautiful Blessed Lady, your elm-hedge are delightful. You do nothing by halves, either at Munich or at Nancy."

It seemed the will of God to let no occasion slip which might make the Good Shepherd known, and fructify the grace attached to the position of Superior-General accorded to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia. When M. Eberhard, on his way to Angers, passed through Paris, he took the opportunity of visiting a friend in England. This friend, also a priest, had a mission in London, in which, he told M. Eberhard, there were several young girls longing to find a Community in which it would be possible to dedicate their lives to the salvation of souls, and to bring back to God those who had gone astray. M. Eberhard then told his friend M. Jauch of the Good Shepherd, and of the colony about to start for Munich, at the King's request; but the latter, though delighted to hear of the existence of such a Community, knew not whether his postulants could be admitted, as they had no dowry. M. Eberhard, however, promised to lay the matter before the Mother-General, with whose disinterested generosity he was well acquainted. Father Jauch, persuaded at length by the words of his friend, expressed a wish to establish these religious in England, and M. Eberhard again undertook to be his ambassador to the Mother-General, and to ask for a foundation in London.

True, he had not long to plead, for the servant of God, whose every effort was directed to the extension of her work for the salvation of souls, needed not to be persuaded.

England, once the "Island of Saints," seemed to her a land of promise. She foresaw for her daughters, in a country so deeply religious, that multitudes would owe to their zeal the salvation of their souls. Like M. Olier, she yearned for England's conversion, and, so far as she was able, laboured for it. Nor had M. Eberhard calculated too much upon her generosity; she accepted the dowerless English postulants, and received them as the first-fruits of a country great and beautiful, sent to her by God.

She sent Mother Mary of the Angels Levoyer, Superior of Lille, and one other religious to London, to see whether a foundation in England were possible. The venerable M. Jauch was completely taken aback at this unexpected zeal on Mother-Foundress' part, and told the Sisters he had no house ready for them, and that they must look only to Divine Providence and wait. But Mother Pelletier's daughters were not discouraged. M. Dehée left them at the end of a fortnight, but they stayed on in obedience to their Mother's orders (as she did not recall them), and still more out of fidelity to the spirit she had instilled into them—a spirit of confidence in Divine Providence and readiness to endure humiliations and poverty. Their Mother wrote to them very often, and kept up their courage. She seemed to have received

from Heaven a clear prevision of the great good the Institute was to do in England. Every difficulty and trouble that befell her daughters seemed to her but tokens that the foundation was the will of God, and that it was to be.

Gradually, through the English novices mentioned above, the Good Shepherd began to be known in various circles. People of station began to take an interest in the fate of the two religious, and the Marchioness of Wellesley among the number. The Vicar-Apostolic of London, Bishop Griffiths, having examined the Constitutions of the Order, consented to a foundation, but at the expense of the Congregation, for his own charges already exceeded his means. Lady Wellesley, however, promised an annual subscription, and Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia was ready to undertake the foundation; but, dear as it cost her zeal, she gave it up in obedience to Mgr. Paysant, Bishop of Angers, who, when asked for necessary authorisations, counselled delay on the score of the heavy expenses which would be entailed. But, while recalling Sister Mary of the Angels, Mother Foundress felt that something at least had been done. Difficulties had been smoothed over, sufferings rewarded. The Order was, at any rate, known, and being known, was called for, and Bishop Griffiths himself was among those who wished for a foundation.

To Sister Mary of the Angels it was also an additional consolation that she brought back with her, as an offering to the Mother, the novices who were the

first-fruits of a country whence so many religious devoted to the Order have since come. The arrival of these postulants was treated as a great festival at Angers. Their very language at first was a source of much merriment among the French, who could neither understand nor make themselves understood. The first conversations which took place were exceedingly amusing on both sides.¹

It was at that time difficult to find a confessor for them in Angers; but at length God sent one after His own heart.

¹ One would ask them, "*Voulez-vous retourner à Londres? Oh! mourir avant: nous vouloir être religieuses.*" Une disait, "*Ecrirai à maman, plus pleurez vous: moi heureuse ici—premier paradis—pas perdue.*"



Dubut, phot., Angers.

CHAPTER II

MGR. DE HERCÉ—LONDON

1840

Mgr. de Hercé at the Good Shepherd—Mother Pelletier's letter—She still thinks of a convent in England—The statues and pictures at Angers—The religious leave for London—Difficulties—Mother Pelletier's letters—Purchase of a house in London—Mother Pelletier and the English novices.

A CLERGYMAN from Nantes was one day visiting the Good Shepherd at Angers, and, while showing him over it, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia mentioned her embarrassment about a confessor for her English postulants. In reply, he told her of the zeal and humility of his own Bishop, Mgr. de Hercé; said his confessional in the Cathedral was often besieged by the poor, and strongly advised her not to be afraid of applying to him.

Thus encouraged, and urged by love of souls, she wrote the following letter:—

"July 10th, 1840.

"MONSEIGNEUR,—A worthy ecclesiastic of your diocese, having obtained leave from our Superior to visit our monastery, it gave us great pleasure to gratify his desire. During his visit, we happened to mention to him that we had just received a little

colony of young English ladies into our dear Novitiate, and that, knowing no priest who speaks their language, we have been somewhat at a loss. This clergyman then told us that your Lordship speaks English well, and that he was sure we might rely on your fatherly kindness for help. Acting upon this information, we venture now to approach you, first, to offer you our most humble homage, and next to beg you to tell us whether you could, by any means, bestow some spiritual succour upon this little band of strangers, to us so unspeakably dear.

“If your Lordship were likely to be anywhere, within even ten leagues of Angers, and would deign to consent, we would send our dear children to meet you, that they might have the consolation of confiding to you their little difficulties; and if, by a special favour from God, we should have the honour of a visit from your Lordship, we would venture to beseech you to crown your kindness towards us by graciously consenting to perform in English the ceremony of their clothing. If we may hope for the happiness of obtaining this favour, we would also venture to ask you to give us notice a little beforehand, so that we may be able to have the ceremonial translated, and everything prepared for so great an occasion.

“I am ashamed, Monseigneur, of having ventured to ask so much, and fear you may think my requests indiscreet; but I count on your great charity to find excuses for me, and upon your tenderness and zeal to succour these souls, so dear to me, with whom we

join in offering to your Lordship the expression of our lively gratitude and profound respect, and have the honour to remain, your Lordship's most humble and most obedient daughter and servant in our Lord,

“MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA.”

Less than this would have stirred the good Bishop's zeal, and he readily placed himself at Mother Foundress' disposal, in the following letter:—

“It will give me great pleasure to be of use to the young ladies who desire to dedicate themselves to God in your Order. You have only to command, and I shall obey. The day on which I shall be privileged to give the veil to these angels will be to me a most happy one. Together, at one altar, with one heart and soul, burning with love for the Lamb that was slain, we shall all unite in praising and blessing the Lord.

“Allow me to thank you for affording me so great an opportunity for my own edification and improvement in beholding such fervour. I shall be like the fallow ground surrounded by roses and gaining somewhat of their heavenly fragrance. The ceremony and discourse will be partly in English, partly in French, with a little Italian, if you wish for it; but I will do my best to respond to your kind confidence.”

The pious Bishop wrote no less than four letters to the Mother, to thank her, to appoint a day most convenient for her postulants, and to place himself at her disposal; each letter showing, not only the same

deep humility, but a touching admiration for the work of the Good Shepherd, the writer, apparently, feeling himself under obligation rather than conferring a favour.

On the 6th September 1840, a week before his visit, he wrote as follows:—

“DEAR REV. MOTHER,—I am coming to Angers solely for you and for your dear children, so that I shall be entirely at your disposal all Saturday and Sunday. The diligence which leaves here on Friday evening, will drop me near your door on Saturday morning at six o’clock. I will go first to M. Regnier, and leave my luggage at the Bishop’s Palace. I will then come and say Mass in your chapel for you, Rev. Mother and your dear postulants, and after that I shall be with you all day until evening, and we will make arrangements for the Sunday’s function. I shall be delighted to hear all you have to tell me of the actual state and future prospects of your admirable undertaking, which seems destined to spread the good odour of Jesus Christ over the face of the earth; that it may be so is my earnest prayer to God. The two days I hope to spend with you, Rev. Mother, will be for me days of festive enjoyment. I shall be sorry to take leave of you, but shall be edified, deeply moved, and, if possible, take with me somewhat of your pious novices’ fervour. Please offer them my kindest wishes, and accept the deep respect wherewith I remain, dear Rev. Mother, your most humble and obedient servant,

✠ J. FRANCIS,

Bishop of Nantes.”

A fortnight after his visit to Angers he wrote to her again: "The days I spent in your house were indeed festivals; but they passed away too soon. I thank God for having granted me so edifying a sight, and I am very grateful to you for all your kindness to me. I hope you will write to me when you return. I shall be most happy to hear from you."

From that time Mgr. de Hercé never failed to manifest the interest he took in the Good Shepherd, and to keep up correspondence with Mother Foundress. This holy Bishop, whose apostolic zeal was the edification of Nantes, was so impressed by the piety and religious spirit he had seen at the Good Shepherd, that he regarded Mother St. Euphrasia's invitation as a special favour from Heaven. His zeal was rewarded by the welcome wherewith he was received.

On October 19th he wrote to the venerated Foundress as follows:—

"DEAR REV. MOTHER,—It is I who should thank you as the instrument of God's kindness to His poor servant. Happy the hours I shall spend in your holy house. I shall be glad to see you once more and your pious English ladies, whom I love to call my children, as well as all your saintly daughters, whom I cannot help cherishing. I shall be delighted to meet Mother Prioress from Rome, but she will see nothing but a very natural sentiment in the warm interest I take in your daughters of Albion; and as I

have no merit in it, my little visit is certainly not worth mentioning to the Holy Father. Your pious Founder wishes His Holiness had made a Missionary Bishop of me, which would also have been much to my own taste, but instead of that he has placed me at Nantes, where I am only too well off. Should you want me for the whole day on the 28th, I shall thankfully accept the bed which you say will be prepared for me, but I shall not want the carriage you kindly offer. I shall leave by steamboat, either at two o'clock on Wednesday afternoon or by the morning boat on the 29th, according to my dear children's need of me. You and they shall rule me, and my great happiness will be in submission to such holy desires. I shall feel that I am in the company of angels, and shall try to plunge my poor heart into those sacred flames that burn so ardently in yours, that in them its fervour may be rekindled. I would rather your Bishop knew nothing of this flying visit to you, because later on I hope to visit him at some time convenient to you, with the view of being of some further use to the dear children whom it has pleased the Lord and you to give me.

"Please offer them *my respectful and tender love*; and to your whole Congregation, without exception, my respects; for all your daughters are the beloved children of Jesus Christ, and may claim my affection and respect. Please also kindly present my respects to your good Chaplains, and, for yourself, accept the homage of the affectionate and profound respect which

will ever be yours, madame, and good Mother, from
your very humble and obedient servant,

“✠ J. FRANCIS,

Bishop of Nantes.”

The good Bishop now regarded himself as director of the little English colony at the Good Shepherd. The straightforward ways of his “dear novices,” the deliberate manner with which they responded to the call of God, and other qualities belonging naturally and markedly to the English as a race, and which, in them, were enhanced by grace, attracted his apostolic affection.

He wrote the following letter to Mme. Pelletier six weeks after the final departure of the religious of the Good Shepherd to found a house in London:—

“NANTES, November 18th, 1840.

“I was very glad to receive news of you and all your dear Community, and especially of my dear English daughters. They seemed to me so truly pious that I had no doubts of their fervour, their joy in bearing the yoke of the Lord; and your assurances confirm my hopes that they will become Saints. They will be your consolation, madame, who are to them so kind a Mother, and they will also be that of the Church by their virtues and zeal in propagating the love of our Lord. Their exactitude with regard to the Communions of Rule, the inward peace which is reflected in their countenances, are surely signs of a true vocation. God has loved them and chosen them

to be His Spouses, and they have responded to that blessed call, which will make itself heard more and more in the depths of the Sanctuary He has chosen for Himself within their pure souls. My heart, dear Mother Superior, crossed the sea with your dear daughters. I stood at the helm, by the boiler and the compass, and I lost not a moment without offering some petition to our Lord to smooth the waves under their path. The wind was in the right quarter, and I hope they got through with nothing worse than perhaps a few qualms. To-day their innocent voices are singing the canticles of the Lord by the waters of Babylon, and will soon awaken numerous echoes. I shall rejoice to hear of the success of their journey. If not inconvenient, madame, I shall ask you for hospitality on the 4th January. Tuesday will be devoted to the confessional, and Wednesday, feast of the Epiphany, we shall have the moving function. That evening I will go to the Bishop of Angers, and spend the following day with him. But I would rather not write to him until you have done me the honour to let me know if this arrangement will suit you, because, if it interferes in the least with any plans you, or your dear novices, may have made, I will choose some other time; for I am most anxious to conform in every way, so far as it depends on myself, with whatever is most agreeable to you. So I wait for orders from you. I hope you will allow me, madame, to send you a pastoral relating to devotion to our Blessed Lady, and to her Immaculate Concep-

tion ; it will be ready about the 6th of next month. I thank the Lord, madame, for having given me the pleasure and edification of knowing you and your excellent work. Please give my affectionate respects to all your religious, and particularly to my dear English, Italians, and Germans. I love them all tenderly. I kiss the hands of your poorest orphans, and am, with very respectful regards, dear madame, your most humble and obedient servant,

“ ✠ J. FRANCIS,

Bishop of Nantes.”

The holy joy visible in the pious Bishop's letters to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, might lead one to suppose he was receiving instead of conferring favours. Reminiscences of early English experiences had been awakened in him. He remembered that the English people had been kind to him in his childhood, their straightforward common-sense, and general recognition of the necessity of religious faith. Since his visits to the Good Shepherd, his mind had been perpetually recurring to a hope dear to him ; this Order might be the means of bringing at least some of the English people back to the faith ; of restoring the Presence of our Lord Jesus Christ to some of His Temples. The English novices, to whom he had been preaching, thoroughly good, exclusively animated with the apostolic spirit as they seemed to him, might do all this, and thus repair some of the breaches made by heresy in the Catholic Church in the Island of Saints.

In the month of December 1840, he wrote thus to Mother Pelletier:—

“DEAR MOTHER SUPERIOR, — It will be a day of rejoicing to me when I go back to your holy house. It will make me very happy to hear the voices of the Lord’s dear children, to give them the veil ; not to speak of the pleasure it will be to see once more all the dear English novices and your other pious daughters, all of whom I love tenderly. Before letting the Bishop of Angers know I am coming, I should like to hear from you whether the days we fixed are still convenient to you. If you have made any changes in your former arrangements I will gladly conform to them, as I am most anxious to do just what is most agreeable to you. Please, therefore, kindly let me know the time you have fixed, that I may write to the Bishop. Nothing will disturb my arrangements ; command, and it will be my pleasure to obey. You have given me much pleasure, my dear Rev. Mother, by sending me news of the dear little colony in London. I am now longing to know whether they are succeeding, whether the Marchioness of Wellesley is favourably impressed by them, and whether the house will be easily founded. I am very sorry to hear that the climate of Angers does not suit some of these interesting English novices, but one may serve and love God in all places, and, wherever it may please Him to call them, they are sure to praise and bless Him. The fervour of those still remaining with you justifies my expectations.

Theirs are pure hearts, penetrated with the love of God, and day by day increasing in those precious graces which abound in the House of the Lord. I shall delight in seeing them again. Their piety reinvigorates my zeal, and I leave them with regret. I always envy the happy lot of your Chaplains.

“Please, dear Rev. Mother, kindly offer my affectionate respects to all your good Sisters, to the English especially, whom the Lord seems to give to me; also to your Italian and German daughters: all are dear to me.”

It was through the first English novices, as we have seen, that the tie was formed between Mgr. de Hercé and Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, and through them also were many other graces to be vouchsafed to the Good Shepherd. More postulants soon came from London, sent by Father Jauch; he still was begging for a foundation, and was encouraged by Lady Wellesley and by Mons. l'Abbé Voyaux de Franoux,¹ a French Priest, settled in England, who offered a house for the foundation at St. Leonard's-on-Sea.

The Mother, in spite of opposition at first, felt confident the foundation in England would succeed. “The ashes of the martyrs seem to be quickened,” said she to her daughters, “to call us to that city where once a holy soul foretold our work would restore the faith.”

¹ L'Abbé Voyaux de Franoux was, for several years in the early decades of this nineteenth century, the head of the Chelsea mission.

Even the act of obedience by which she had restrained her first ardour for this foundation seemed to her the promise of good things to come, for religious obedience was in her eyes a seed which, sooner or later, in God's good time, always springs up to His glory. "God is jealous of His work," she was wont to say. "It is not His will that aught in this, which is nothing but a miracle of His mercy, should seem to be due to man. The foundation will be the fruit of prayer, obedience, and confidence in God's goodness."

The foundation was indeed the fruit of prayer. Sister Mary of the Angels Levoyer (who had begun the work in England) promised to say the Office of the Immaculate Conception every day for a year for the success of the mission. The religious at the Mother House promised St. Radegunda an altar if she would protect the foundation.

Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia was wont to erect altars and statues and pictures in the cloisters, gardens, and principal rooms of her convent, as so many *ex-votos* for graces obtained for the several houses of the Order. It was one of her pious practices, as we have already mentioned, to interest some particular Saint in the success of each foundation, and to perpetuate her gratitude by putting up a memorial at the Mother House, to remind herself and her daughters of the Saint's favours. The whole supernatural history of the Order's extension over the globe is thus recorded in pictures, statues, and altars at the

Good Shepherd. Here, a picture commemorates a foundation in Italy; there, a statue one in America; an altar elsewhere, the preservation of a house in Germany.

It was also her delight to dwell in habitual remembrance of the Communion of Saints, and to think of her convent as the abode of Angels and Saints. To her one of the joys of conventual life was to feel that her convent was inhabited by angelic guests, who, as in Jacob's vision, continually ascended and descended, carrying up to God the prayers and good works of the religious, and bringing down to them the blessings of Heaven.

St. Radegunda earned her altar; the Blessed Virgin was moved by the prayers of Mother Foundress and of Sister Mary of the Angels. After a few weeks' delay Mgr. Paysant, solicited by the Abbé Mainguy, granted the authorisation for religious to be sent to London to found a house.

The departure of the first little band for London was a great event in the Community. The religious had to exchange their white habit for black secular dresses, a slight trial, in which Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia comforted them with her usual gift of the word in season: "I am black but beautiful," she said. She gave them 2000 francs, and placed them under the care of the Abbé Mainguy, who had kindly consented to accompany them. An English postulant also went to act as interpreter.

In those days, before railways and steamboats had

made long journeys common, a journey to England was like going to another world, and great was the emotion felt by the religious, left behind, at parting with their Sisters. They bade them good-bye as if they were never again to see them.

After a rough crossing, during which all suffered from sea-sickness, they reached London on the 19th November. It was a wintry, foggy day, and London, with its smoke-blackened buildings, its streets crowded with busy commerce, made a deep impression on the religious. It was difficult for them to find a lodging fit for them and suited to their poverty, and when they called to ask for M. Voyaux, the French priest who had been so anxious for them to come, and whom they had expected to befriend them, they found he had died three days previously. This, however, trial as it was, did not damp their courage,—they knelt down by his coffin with the firm hope he would be their friend in heaven.

The Bishop, Dr. Griffiths' welcome was most cordial, and, in obedience to his instructions, his secretaries were so kind that they made the nuns feel his house that of a father. The day after arriving, Sister Mary of St. Joseph Regaudiat, Superior of the English Sisters, wrote to Mother Foundress to give an account of the journey and relieve her anxiety, and also to satisfy the very legitimate curiosity felt by all the Sisters and good friends who were praying for the travellers. Mgr. de Herc 's interest in the commencement of the Order in England was, of course, very



Dubut, phot., Angers.

" REJOICE WITH ME BECAUSE I HAVE FOUND
MY SHEEP THAT WAS LOST "

LUKE XV, 6.

earnest. He wrote the following letter to the Mother about this time :—

“NANTES, *February 9th, 1841.*

“DEAR REV. MOTHER,—Your kind letter gave me much pleasure. I imagined the Marchioness of Wellesley smiling graciously on the new Community, and giving it the encouragement of her benevolent protection; but she has written me a long letter (which I enclose in this), telling me she will take no part in the good work, and leaves it entirely to your management. One of your novices will translate it for you, and you will be struck, as I have been, with the coldness of its tone.

“I did my best for you when I wrote to her, as I told her of my grateful love for the English from early associations, and further added that for her in particular I entertained feelings of great respect and admiration. I shall now leave her letter for a time unanswered, it being an answer to mine. Still, I should like to do whatever you think best. You know full well that you have nothing to fear so far as my help goes. I shall always be glad to add my grain of sand to the scale, to weigh it down to the side you wish.

“You and your young daughters, dear Rev. Mother, are very dear to me; my heart prays for you unceasingly, and I constantly regret that you should be so far from me. Happily, love of our Lord does away with distance of place, and, in His precious Blood, all

friends in every clime meet together and form one family. The family of which you are head is after my own heart, and I cherish it with tender affection. On St. Agatha's day I thought of the little feast to which your orphan children had invited me, and I was present at it in spirit. I beg you will tell them this and thank them; add too that I press my lips to those little sick hands.

"Please also be so very good as to give my affectionate respects to all your dear daughters, whom I like to call mine, regardless of their nationality; but all the same, I never forget that I have no actual mission, except to my good English children. But this special mission, dear Mother Superior, by no means fetters my heart, which belongs to all of you, and especially to yourself."

The news from London was sent on at once to Mgr. Hercé, the spiritual father of the English contingent, as he loved to consider himself. On the 9th March 1841, he answered Mother Foundress's letter:—

"It is ever a pleasure to me to receive news of you, and of your dear London daughters. Their perseverance edifies and moves me. I bless God for having given them such admirable sentiments, and for having let me witness them. He is directing His own work with His customary goodness. If Lady Wellesley is not the instrument, the Lord will know how to find another."

The first months in London were very hard. The

religious found themselves suddenly plunged into a Protestant city, unable to understand or speak the language, and were soon deprived of their kind protector, M. Mainguy, who returned to Angers. They went for a short time to Hastings and St. Leonard's, then came back to London, and stayed at a Benedictine convent while looking for a suitable place for their foundation. God only knows all they had to go through while making those expeditions. One evening, when they wanted to get home to the Benedictine convent, they were put into the wrong omnibus and taken in the opposite direction; their terror at finding themselves, late at night, lost in an unknown quarter of London, may be imagined. When they spoke of their vocation, people seemed hardly to understand, and wondered any one could have zeal enough to take up such a life.

All this time they were keeping Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia fully acquainted with their tribulations, and she, constant in her desire that her daughters should settle in the Island of Saints, was appealing for help to our Blessed Lady. One day, after a Mass had been offered for the intention of the foundation, she assembled her Community, and a promise was made to say a *Memorare* every day for a year for the success of the convent in London. The Mother then wrote as follows to Sister Mary of St. Joseph Regaudiat:—

“London is our daughter: we shall pay dear for our foundation, but you must not give up, even if it

were necessary to work by night as well as by day, and to make great pecuniary sacrifices."

She often talked to her Community of the troubles of their Sisters in England. She spoke also of her confidence in the Blessed Virgin's protection of the house.

On the 24th March she said to them, "To-morrow, my dear daughters, our English Sisters will at last have a house of their own, where they can receive penitents and children. We may now, therefore, say that this much-desired foundation is about to be born, but it will still sorely need our help, for a child just born is yet far from being able to walk alone. I am very glad indeed that this happy event should take place upon such a beautiful day. Our Blessed Lady should truly be called the London Foundress. Our good St. Joseph, too, has contributed his share to this hallowed work, but he wishes to leave all the honour thereof to his Spouse, and to-morrow will offer it to her as a bouquet. I think that St. Euphrasia has helped too; she has been talking to the good God about London. In order to draw down upon us more and more the protection of Mary and St. Joseph, we will add to the devotions of the procession for the month of March, prayers to our Lady of the Seven Dolours."

The religious signed the deed which made the London house their own, on the feast of the Seven Dolours of the Blessed Virgin, and entered into possession on the first day of the month of Mary. To them,

as to Mother-General, it seemed that the Blessed Virgin deigned to show her special protection of the foundation. Little by little it took shape; furniture was provided by gifts from the different Communities, notably Lille, where Mother Mary of the Angels was Superior. Bishop Griffiths came to bless the room which was to serve as a chapel, and, a few months later, returned to give Communion and Confirmation to the first penitents the Sisters had received. It was the beginning of a great work. The religious wrote to their Sisters at Angers—

“We will walk constantly in the footsteps of our revered Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, who is to us a pillar of fire to lighten and direct our path.”

Whilst the foundation was being thus gradually made, Mother-General, in the Novitiate at Angers, was preparing new missionaries for England. Since the arrival thence of the first postulants, and the opening up of this new field of missions, she had laboured with redoubled zeal in forming her daughters and communicating to them her apostolic ardour. The Novitiate at Angers was now really a Missionary Seminary, where different languages were taught and spoken. There were twice as many novice mistresses, and some learned English; the English novices meantime were learning French, and the first reward of their diligence was to understand Mother Foundress' instructions. Her burning words, instinct with the love of God and of souls, took deep root in those young hearts, firing them with a zeal all the

more steadfast because it laid hold of colder temperaments. The practical common sense of the Englishman can rise to the most sublime heroism if he be but spurred on by devotedness to a great cause.

Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia was above all things careful to make humility the groundwork of the piety of her daughters. She used often to repeat to them, "God is so jealous of our work that He will not allow man to have a hand in it." And no neglect, no hostility on the part of men discouraged her. On the contrary, she was convinced that it pleased God to show thereby His approval of those works which are after His own heart, and on such trials she grounded her hopes for success. Nor did she ever cease to inculcate humility. "My daughters, our Congregation is nearing its golden age, because the first seek to be the last."

CHAPTER III

MISSIONARY ZEAL

Mother Pelletier sends her daughters to Paris—Her devotion to our Lady of the Seven Dolours—Mgr. Bourget, Bishop of Montreal—Mgr. de Paysant's death—Mgr. de Herc  encourages Mother Pelletier to accept foreign missions—Mgr. Flaget—The Cardinal Protector's letter.

WHILE travelling through the south of France, Mme. de Lamartine, who was president of a society for the protection of young females released from the prison of St. Lazare, visited the Good Shepherd at Arles, and was so greatly edified that she began at once to think of handing over her own *prot g es* to the Order. She wrote, therefore, to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, who gladly responded to her idea of founding a house in Paris, that great centre of misery and of charity. The Archbishop, Mgr. Affre, sanctioned the scheme, and Mother-General then went to Paris to discuss it with Mme. de Lamartine and Mme. de Vaux. A few weeks later she sent four of her daughters to temporary quarters in the Boulevard des Gobelins. They arrived there on 1st January 1841, but moved soon afterwards to the Rue Vaugirard.

As usual with Mother Pelletier's daughters, it was in extreme poverty they began to organise their house

and collect their flock of penitents and Preservation children, which, by degrees, they moulded into shape. Like their Mother, their greatest joy was to see a great number of penitents seeking admittance. One of the first inmates was a young slave, whom a lady had brought from New Orleans, and wanted to send back on account of her insubordination, but whom the religious succeeded in converting by gentle measures.

Meantime they frequently wrote to Angers, whence their Mother, with keen anxiety, followed every detail of those first days. In one of their letters they tell her that M. Dubuquoi, a pious layman, attached to the household of Louis Philippe, is sending her a group of statuary, representing our Lady of the Seven Dolours, a devotion they knew she loved. This gift was one she particularly valued. She had taught her daughters habitually to venerate our Blessed Lady in all the great sorrows of her life: when from Simeon she learns of the suffering in store for her Divine Son; when on the road from Jerusalem to Nazareth she becomes aware of His absence; when in the *Via Dolorosa* she meets Him bearing His Cross and crowned with thorns; when she sees Him nailed to His Cross; when, after the descent from it, she receives His dead Body into her arms; when she sees Joseph of Arimathea lay It in the tomb. This long series of Mary's sorrows was the frequent subject of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's meditations, the source whence she drew strength to utter no complaint.

M. Dubuquoi followed up his kind gift to Angers, by sending copies of the same group to Metz, Strasbourg, Amiens, and Paris. The daughters liked to draw zeal and strength from the same sources as their Mother.

The religious wrote to her from Paris that, having long sighed in vain for Jesus in their midst, they now had at least His Mother, and could go to her with their troubles, and that she seemed to them to say, "Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow."

At Rome the Good Shepherd now ranked among great missionary Orders. No favour vouchsafed from Heaven could have been more highly valued by Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia than that the Pope and his Cardinals should bless, approve, and set a great value upon her work; for to be the Church's instrument for the conversion of souls had always been her dearest wish.

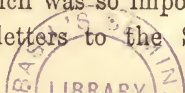
When Mgr. Bourget, the Bishop of Montreal, went to Rome to decide upon the establishment of some new Orders in his diocese, he was advised at Propaganda to apply to Mme. Pelletier for a house of refuge for penitent women. He came to Angers, visited the convent, and was so struck by the admirable order of the house, by the seemly appearance of the 120 penitents in it, that when their mistress asked to be allowed to return with him to his diocese at the head of a Good Shepherd colony, he gratefully accepted the proposal. His saintly exterior, his pious

exhortations, his account of his missions in America, still so much in need of missionaries, stirred the zeal of every heart; but on the penitents wondering how he could expose himself to so much fatigue and danger for the poorest of his flock, his answer was, "What! my dear children, are we to think anything of a couple of thousand leagues, when our Lord Jesus Christ did not shrink from leaving heaven to save sinners! Oh, no, what I have done is nothing at all."

He had been to Chartres on his way to Angers, to put his journey under our Blessed Lady's protection, and there, to his amazement, had found *ex-votos* sent from Canada by Indians, his own diocesans. When shown these tokens of his children's piety by the Abbé Pie (afterwards Bishop of Poitiers), he was unable to restrain his tears. His love of souls made a deep impression on Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, but, owing to Mgr. Paysant's insurmountable opposition to such distant enterprises, she was obliged, at the cost of much sorrow to herself, to set aside the idea of the proposed foundation in America.

But the horizon of future possibilities was widened, and from that day she looked forward to the time when the Blessed Virgin should open to her daughters that vast field of labour.

Meanwhile, her zeal for foreign missions being held in check by her Bishop, she was attentively watching the foundations just started in London and Munich, the success of which was so important. She was constantly sending letters to the Superior at Munich,



encouraging her in her difficulties, and relating to her all the wonderful things God was doing for the Institute in London and elsewhere. On the 3rd of July she wrote to her—

“‘ My daughter, thou shalt see great things !’

“ My good Mary of St. John of the Cross, and Mary of the Sacred Heart, the Lord and your poor Mother often keep you a long time waiting, like St. Theresa, but afterwards they tell you of great things. *Take and read* this little enclosure ; there you will see your little London Sister walking all alone, and many other wonderful things. I wanted to read all yours, too, my beloved daughters, but could not make out everything. You have such very bad ink that we who love you and our dear Munich (tribe of my heart and of my *eldest* daughter) had to bear this affliction and deprivation. This Bavaria is the glory of the work. I did manage to make out that you still had a charming young countess, with no fortune. Oh ! that does not matter : give her to us. We are keeping for her the name of the pious victim, the daughter of Heaven, who was taken from us only a week after her clothing. She is praying for us ; we feel the effects already. She breathed her last as I stood by her, all unworthy to witness the death of a Saint. She died in a transport of love. O dear child ! Her Sister, too, is a Saint, and our admirable Sister, Mary of St. Euphrasia of Jesus, is no less so. Do not be surprised at my caring so much for all the Germans, and for Bavaria, and for all

my 'Sacred Hearts.' I am going to keep that name for her of whom you tell me, and whom I so earnestly ask God to give us.

"Your works are making giant strides! It sounds as if this holy home would be magnificent! You can imagine how my heart rejoices in God! You, my poor St. John of the Cross, who have known how I have suffered, may understand what gratitude I feel to God and to our Blessed Lady, who has brought us out of so many troubles. London, Paris, Amiens! all safe! The Jesuit Fathers just as favourable to the work as ever again! Let us pray very much, and keep ourselves humble and prudent. We are going to buy the house at Bourges, to make our position more and more secure. Paris has no Superior, which I feel very much; but I have great hope that God will complete His own work! We want more choir postulants. We would gladly take six without dowry, if they were really well-educated girls. I mean six Germans. See, my daughter, if there is any way of doing this. *Yes*, Mary of St. Helen has gone back to Strasbourg; her adversaries in Paris were really bitter against her. But do not ever speak of it to her. If I could only have had our great Sister Theresa of Jesus for Paris, we should have been too well satisfied, but she is in the right place everywhere!

"Farewell, my beloved children! Believe in the tender affection with which, in union with the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, I am, your attached Mother,

MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA."

A little later, moved by the sight of the great good her daughters are doing, and by their announcement of budding vocations, she gives utterance to the voice of praise, and sings a canticle of thanksgiving.

“FROM OUR MONASTERY AT ANGERS,
August 12th, 1841.”

“‘I will work wonders among you.’”

“My good Mary St. John of the Cross, and my beloved Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart, your letters are a great comfort to us, and poured into our heart a stream of peace and joy. Oh! my dear daughters, thank you for writing. We poured ourselves out in acts of thanksgiving in the Presence of our thrice holy God, who has done for us such marvellous things. His Divine goodness has preserved to us, for the good of the Church and the honour of our holy Institute, our excellent Father Eberhard. What a triumph for our holy religion. How good of you to write about it to me. But the chiefest consolation of all is your news about the very satisfactory postulants you speak of. The one from Vienna—O God, what a favour! Then the two from Bavaria. If I could only open the eyes of the Sovereign Pontiff and Bishops to the immense good you will do! The Congregation will draw postulants from all over France. But I have one real sorrow, my daughter; there has not been a single aspirant since you left Nancy, and at this very moment we want fifty. I am not exaggerating. The missions are very large; our

houses in France are growing, but it would almost need a miracle to make our Bishop view the work of God in its full light, for there are persons who are always warping his mind, and I can assure you ours is not always a bed of roses. But our Divine Master leads the way, and we wish to follow Him. Great graces spring from the sacred wounds of our Saviour. Ah! it is certainly His adorable Heart which is founding this royal Monastery of Munich. How glad should I be to see it. I have some slight hope for next year.

“God causes you to sow in sorrow, my daughter, truly of the Cross, and you, my good Mary of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, whom I tenderly love. I have read your sorrowful letters, poor children! I feel what you must feel in losing your good and excellent Father. It is a road of sorrowful trial, but the wonderful work you are doing is a tree of love and life. Courage; the more you suffer, so much the more beautiful will be the work. How many souls will owe their life to your sacrifices and troubles. Be comforted in God, seek His glory, be dead to all else. If our love, our tears, our prayers could comfort you, you would be soon comforted. Tell our poor Sisters that we often think of them all, that we pray our Lord to bless them, and that I love them with my whole heart. We often think of your beautiful, magnificent monastery. Must not God have had His own designs in giving it to you? Many sheep will come to your pasture. You are the

only fold in Bavaria; that is why the devil is so furious. If only the work had failed, there would have been so many more sins committed—and how many souls lost!”

A few months after M. Bourget's visit the venerable Bishop of Angers died suddenly, whilst making his pastoral visitation. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia greatly regretted him. He had always shown the most zealous interest in the Institute, and his refusals to permit foundations in distant countries had no other motive than that of securing it a solid basis before extending it. His last letter to the Mother showed the most kindly feelings of affectionate regard for her.

Mgr. Paysant, a man of cultivated mind, and full of moderation and prudence, was a fit person to advise in the direction of a work intended to embrace the whole world. In intercourse with others, he was kind and affectionate towards those who, like Mme. Pelletier, showed confidence in him; for as a priest, viewing the interests of souls from a high standpoint, he was highly gratified by such trust.

Ever since his arrival in Anjou he had given proofs of devotedness to the work of Mother Pelletier, and especially to the institution of the Superior-General, which he looked upon as providentially corresponding to the requirements of the age.

His death brought Mgr. de Hercé to Angers; he stayed for several days at the Good Shepherd, and

plans for foreign missions were meanwhile continually discussed with him. Himself animated with missionary zeal and longings, he fully entered into all Mother Foundress' views when she told him, as she failed not to do, of the Bishop of Montreal's proposals, his wish for foundations in America, and of her daughters' zeal for distant lands. With her he thought that the arrival of novices speaking divers tongues was a providential sign that the Good Shepherd was called to foreign missions. During his visit he gave the religious habit to five English, two Italians, and three Germans. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia told him of the classes for foreign languages she had already established in the Novitiate, and of all she intended to do in further preparation for missions; and the Bishop, to encourage the novices in learning languages, promised to be their examiner.

It will be remembered that Mgr. Flaget (of pious memory) had from the first blessed the missionary vocation of the Order, and it so happened that, just while the Bishop of Nantes and Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia were planning together the establishment of classes for foreign languages in the Novitiate, thus transforming it into a Missionary Seminary, there came a long letter from him, in which he set forth the good the Order would do in the cities of the New World. Two, therefore, of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's most devoted and pious counsellors were thus almost simultaneously inspired to draw her attention to the American missions. And must not

these appeals from servants of God, coming from points so widely apart, yet harmonising with each other and with her own zeal, have seemed to her well-nigh irresistible?

When Bishop Flaget's letter came, on recognising the postmark she kissed it respectfully, handed it to her religious to do the same (for, like herself, they always have kept the most edifying recollections of the writer), then laid it at the foot of our Lady's statue, where it was left all night, that it might, as it were, be received next day from the dear Mother whom the Bishop and Congregation alike so tenderly revered.

The letter was as follows:—

“ August 5th, 1841.

“MADAME,—When I was about to leave Angers, where the late good Bishop had shown me such very great kindness in so many various ways, I deemed it a duty to pay a visit to the Good Shepherd, for the purpose of establishing a union of prayers between the members of your Community and my beloved diocesans. I must do myself the justice to say that every day, at Holy Mass, I say three prayers for all my associates, leaving it to our Divine Saviour, who knows better than I all their temporal and spiritual needs, to help them. Now if I, who am always rushing about from one place to another, have been faithful to my promise, what will not so many holy souls have done for me, souls worthy to be favourite daughters of the Shepherd of Shepherds?

“You will see further proof of my not having forgotten my dear associates at the Good Shepherd in the proposal I am about to lay before you, with the hope of attracting a colony from Angers to my diocese.

“When I was at Nice, Mme. de Couëspel, who is pleased to call herself the Victim and me the Sacrificer, told me she hoped, in spite of all difficulties surrounding her, to succeed in founding an establishment in that town. Nor were those hopes vain. In the same conversation this holy victim told me also that she hoped to do the same thing in my own diocese. I tried to make her feel at once that there would be no possibility of doing this; firstly, because most of our poor young women are Protestants, or destitute of religion; secondly, because the religious who could be sent out would not know the English language; thirdly, because everything is much dearer in America than in France. You often have to pay forty francs in the United States for what would cost only ten in France. With this our conversation ended, and we bade each other farewell.

“Since my return the religious of the Good Shepherd have often been the theme of my conversations; I have spoken of them to my coadjutor and to many other persons. One of my missionaries, who for several years was pastor of the largest town in my diocese (the town which is to be my Episcopal See), is convinced that such an Institution, the only one of the sort in the United States, could not fail to be *popular*, and, for that reason, would be sure to succeed.

He is persuaded that Protestants would welcome it as much as Catholics, and that all sensible people in good circumstances would give it their generous assistance. He says also that every one to whom he has mentioned it has expressed the same feeling.

“Let me, therefore, encourage you to make the attempt; at first on a small scale, say with five or seven religious, of whom three or four ought to be young enough to be able to learn English. They should also be filled with the Spirit of Him whose glorious name is theirs, for, like Him, they will certainly have to suffer many things. But, if God bless their labour, they will also have a very abundant harvest to gather in. There are no less than from 1500 to 2000 of these poor young women in Louisville, out of a population of from 28,000 to 30,000, of whom 5000 only are Catholics. The town, as I have just mentioned, has quite lately been erected into an Episcopal See. The Bishop and his coadjutor are to go to reside there next January. The reverend Jesuit Fathers have already purchased a fine site there for a large college and beautiful seminary. The building will be begun next spring, or perhaps earlier. The Sisters of St. Vincent of Paul have also two establishments in the city—a day-school, and a home where they have forty-two orphans.

“So you see, in the first place, so far as regards their spiritual needs (which are the most essential points), the religious of the Good Shepherd will not be in want; secondly, we are quite convinced, as

regards temporal matters, that so soon as the work is actively begun with fifteen or twenty of the poor girls, there will be at once formed an association of zealous persons who will keep up the supply of work to employ the penitents, and of provisions for their maintenance ; thirdly, if God bless these first efforts, the charity of the faithful will increase in the same proportion, and then, very probably, either government, or the Louisville city corporation, will take the Institution under their protection, and guarantee an annual subsidy ; fourthly and finally, the blessing of God resting on the first establishment, in consequence of the conversion of a great number of these unfortunates. I have no doubt that all their Lordships the Bishops (of whom there are now eighteen) will make every effort to secure similar establishments. As to vocations in America, we may trust that, by God's blessing, He will not leave it without the means necessary for its maintenance and increase.

"I have now laid before you the difficulties and probabilities attending the enterprise, and I must leave it to your own prudence to determine what seems right to your conscience. Pray, and get others to pray, that you may know God's holy will. Be sure you consult M. Regnier, your Superior, and my kind friend ; ask advice also of persons remarkable for their experience, piety, and wisdom.

"Should you feel inclined to make an attempt, in writing to me, have the kindness to tell me, (1) how many Sisters you could send ; (2) the amount

of pecuniary means you could either afford or get from our friends.

“I hope all these details will convince you that I have not forgotten the ladies of the Good Shepherd, of whom it is my glory to be the admirer and hearty friend.

“With the deepest respect and religious attachment, I have the honour to be, madame, your affectionate and devoted servant,”

“✠ B. J. FLAGET,

Bishop of Bardstown.”

The people of Angers, and particularly Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, had held Mgr. Flaget's memory in benediction, ever since his passing visit to their town. His zeal, which his extreme humility, served only to make the more striking, had readily won the admiration of Mother Foundress. Finally, the whole Congregation owed him a debt of gratitude for his share in Mme. de Couëspel's vocation. They looked upon any letter from him as a great favour; a request for a foundation coming from him seemed to them like an audible appeal from God, claiming, for the great land across the ocean, a share in Mme. Pelletier's work.

The good Mother answered Mgr. Flaget immediately as follows:—

“MONSEIGNEUR,—On our knees, and shedding grateful tears, we kissed your holy letter after we had read

it. Blessed be the day and hour when you thought of writing to your family of the Good Shepherd at Angers! Your Lordship's name is preserved amongst us as a treasure of the Institute, beloved and revered by all your children. Oh! if you could but know, Monseigneur, what you are to Angers, what you are to our hearts, you would understand the delight your letter of the 5th August gave us. We have caused its contents to be communicated to the august Head of the Church, for you are the favourite son of his heart. He will rejoice to see us established in your diocese! We happen to know that this is desired by the Court of Rome, which always shields us with its protection, and loads us with its benefits. We know also that Propaganda will lend its aid to the work. M. Regnier, our good Superior, was deeply moved, Monseigneur, by your gracious remembrance of him; he will take the greatest interest in your mission. Oh, how much I thank you for having called him 'your friend.' He was so moved by it, I have never seen him so pleased.

"It is the Divine Shepherd, my Lord, who put it into your heart to remember His poor daughters. Rest assured that nothing shall be wanting on our part in meeting your views; the Lord Himself has prepared from afar the road for your works.

"Since the Vicar-Apostolic of the London district deigned to send for us to come to his city, an English Novitiate has been opened in our house at Angers, and classes for languages have been held. Our Novice

Mistress, as well as several other religious, speak and write both German and English. We think that probably our excellent Sister Mary of St. Teresa of Jesus will be sent out to you. This pious soul has long foreseen the designs God has upon her. Ah! how often has she said to me, 'I shall not die in Europe!' She longs to meet you again on earth, and this grace will not be denied her. So far as I am concerned, I will sacrifice everything for God and for you, and to enter the country which is the object of our prayers and tender hopes. When, therefore, it seems to you that the moment of God is come, you will issue your orders to your children to come to you. We will send you only humble, docile, capable religious; at first, as you wisely suggest, only five or six professed shall be sent.

"The Bishop of Montreal has quite lately travelled to Angers expressly to treat with us about making a foundation in his diocese. He edified us very much, and, on his part, he seemed moved almost to tears at the sight of our dear flocks. He blessed our novices and our penitents.

"Your family is half as large again as when you saw it. Bless it again; bless our town; bless your friend M. Regnier, that we may have him for our Bishop. You know that death has snatched from us our much revered Pastor.

"Deign to accept our most humble thanks for your kindness in having spoken of us to your pious coadjutor, to whom also we are very grateful. And what

shall I say to your dear niece? She is indeed one of the protecting angels who call us to America. The few words she wrote with her own hand deeply moved me. Oh! how much I love in God this dear and good friend. We shall never forget her.

“As soon as your letter was received, we sent a copy of it to your generous victim, Teresa of Jesus. We then intoned the *Te Deum*, after which the whole Community, kneeling, kissed your signature. Our founder, Count de Neuville, came afterwards, and was deeply moved on reading it. The day was one of the happiest we have ever spent. We are yours very sincerely. Here are the sheep of your pasture; they will hearken to your voice. You have here a flock especially dedicated to you.”

Mother Pelletier kept up frequent relations with Rome. She often consulted the Cardinal Protector, relied upon his counsels and decisions, and drew fresh courage from his approval. The letter which follows is one written to her about this time by Cardinal della Porta :—

“ROME, *October 6th, 1841.*

“MADAME,—It is always with renewed pleasure that I hear of the success of your holy Congregation, and of the good it does in the divers countries where it is established, and in writing this letter my object is to express the satisfaction I feel. The house in Rome, by its regularity and perfect order, gives me

much consolation. I have nothing but praise to give it for the progress made, and for the management of the penitents.

“Do not let yourself be discouraged if persecution should be stirred up against you. If God is for us, who shall be against us? God’s work is always contradicted, but by His grace you will triumph over obstacles. I will gladly do what I can to forward the foundation at Montreal, in Canada, when the time comes.

“Receive, madame, the blessing I send you and all your houses. Pray for me, and accept the assurance of my sincere esteem,

“✠ J. CARD. DELLA PORTA,
Protector.”

CHAPTER IV

TRIALS IN THE HOUSES

Mother Pelletier sends help to Bourges and Puy—Cardinal Patrizi is appointed Protector—Mother Pelletier goes to Paris—Trials in that convent—Mother Sophia Superior of the Couvent des Oiseaux—Gratitude of Mother Pelletier—Gregory XVI.—Persecution in the newspapers—Trials—Union in the convent.

To the cares entailed by sending abroad and establishing new colonies, was added the solicitude for the consolidation and improvement of the earlier foundations. The house at Bourges was dark, sunless, too small for the number of penitents seeking admission. The Community wholly lacked the means for the purchase of a more suitable *locale*. The Mother Foundress, hearing that a former Carmelite monastery might suit her daughters, sent 1000 francs, the result in part of the work and economy of the Mother House, and with a donation from the Archbishop and the alms of the faithful, the owner of the old monastery was induced to come to terms. (This purchase was concluded in 1842.) Giving was the main delight of the Mother-General, who was the first to enjoy the happiness she thus conferred on others. She would give as long as she had aught to bestow.

When the Vicar-General of Bourges, M. de Pons,

wrote to give her an account of the repairs the convent required, he thanked her for her generosity, and said that, with the blessing of God, it would be the means of salvation to many souls. At the same time he mentioned for her encouragement, that the newly appointed Archbishop, Mgr. du Pont, would entertain the same kindly feeling towards the Good Shepherd at Bourges, as he had previously at Avignon, and that his attachment to the Order quite equalled that of his predecessor, Mgr. de Villèle. He also told her as good news, that her daughters would find, in their new monastery, a chapel built in 1625, by the Rev. Mother Margaret of St. Joseph.

After Bourges came Puy, where the religious were in such distress through poverty, that not only had they to stop building, but it seemed probable they would have to close their convent. The Mother at Angers was the centre to which all joy or sorrow converged, and her heart was the source of consolation and encouragement. If she could give her daughters nothing else, her compassion seemed to lighten their burden, and she always prayed, and got others to pray for them.

Good news always made her happy ; as, for instance, when a letter from Puy told of the Prefect's visit to the convent, of his interest in its various offices, in its difficulties ; of his pity for the nuns in their troubles and poverty ; of his having started a silk-loom in the house, for which a charitable lady was to defray the expenses. Thus did hopeful days

succeed times of gloom, and the Mother's heart expanded. She reminded her daughters of their debt of gratitude to God.

Alternations of joy and sorrow, of good and bad news, form the web of every human life, especially that of those invested with authority; and as the number of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's houses and subjects increased, her life was more and more chequered with these vicissitudes. Every pure joy was followed by the looming of some dark cloud upon the horizon; her life was a constant strain, which no soul weak in virtue could have withstood.

In October 1841, she had the great happiness of entertaining Mgr. Brossais St. Marc, Bishop of Rennes, at the Good Shepherd of Angers, and to the great and holy joy of the Community, he celebrated the feast of the Sacred Heart in their midst. In the following December she received news of the death of Cardinal della Porta, Protector of the Congregation, a loss she felt deeply, for the Cardinal had always taken a very friendly interest in the Institute, particularly in the Roman houses, which he often visited. She was not consoled until she heard of the nomination of Cardinal Patrizi, who, even before this official appointment, had often visited the houses in Rome, to encourage the religious and stimulate the penitents to try and do their best. Once having fully grasped the grand scheme of the Institute, he became Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's principal supporter, and constantly helped her to ward off attacks upon the Community.

The Institute was, at this time, already in a very flourishing condition. It counted twenty monasteries in France, six abroad (twenty-six in all), 500 religious, 1200 penitents, 126 novices. With such resources at command, two such souls as Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia and Cardinal Patrizi, in their combined zeal, were capable of attempting to save all the penitents in the world.

Hardly had Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia been consoled in this quarter, than other troubles began to rain upon her. The year 1842 opened with sad tidings. In one convent typhus fever was carrying off its victims; at Nancy another disease was devastating the house; at Grenoble, also, there was an epidemic. In Paris the religious were so overburdened with work that they were breaking down. At Arles the foundation seemed likely to come to an end for want of means. Angers itself was in extreme poverty, and the Foundress was unable to relieve all these sufferings. But she drew confidence even from the trials themselves. A year begun with so many crosses could not fail, she was convinced, to prove a year of grace. She therefore set about building in the convent, first a chapel to our Lady of Dolours, and then the cloisters, which were made higher, glazed, and ventilated, the whole cost being generously defrayed by Mme. d'Angigné, out of a legacy she had just inherited.

About this time arrived a postulant who was afterwards to become both a saintly religious and a benefactress of the Order—Mlle. von Neubek,

lady-in-waiting to Her Highness the Princess of Helchingen.

The house in Paris, upon which Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia had always built great hopes, was to her a source of much anxiety. Paris, the epitome of modern life, with its feverish agitation, absorbing countless lives to throw them into the vortex of its own restless motion ; Paris, with its multitude of victims, more than any other city had always attracted her zeal. She imagined, in the very heart of the great city, surrounded by all its tumult and distress, the quiet home of her daughters, with its doors ever open to penitent souls, and the peace within its walls, hushing the tumult from the outer world. Paris was to her, moreover, the great and beautiful type of generous devotedness to every noble cause, the inexhaustible source of charity. Side by side with the Paris which thinks only of amusement, and takes life as a stage where each has to play an unreal part and stifle conscience, she beheld the other Paris, the heir of the "good city" of St. Louis, the model of true piety, with its Sanctuaries more thronged than any in France ; Paris, with its examples of heroism, its history more full of edifying instances of noble devotedness to our Divine Lord, and to the salvation of souls, than that of any town in the world ; the city of extremes, of shameless vice and self-sacrifice—and it appeared to her the predestined site for a house of the Good Shepherd. The multitude of its penitents required it, the generosity of the faithful would support it.

It was a foundation for which Mother Pelletier spent herself with unsparing zeal, and that the trial might not fail to be one of the most meritorious she had ever passed through, she met with obstacles of every description.

On the 9th of January 1842, she went to Paris to settle some misunderstandings which had arisen between her daughters of the Rue de Vaugirard and the Lady Patronesses. She remained with her daughters a fortnight, and was visited by the patronesses, Mme. de Lamartine and Mme. de Vaux. She also received visits from certain Bishops, who were either interested in her work or in need of her services—these were Mgr. de Forbin Janson, Bishop of Nancy; Mgr. Donnet, Archbishop of Bordeaux; and Mgr. de Bonald, Archbishop of Lyons. With the full approval of the Lady Patronesses, she hired a larger house in the Rue Plumet, to which the penitents were transferred; and fair promises for its support having been freely made, and the house blessed by Mgr. de Forbin Janson, she returned to Angers. Hardly had she reached Angers than tidings of fresh difficulties followed her. The work was left without support; friends were withdrawing; the religious were losing heart. She had then to recall the Superior to Angers, and appealed to the skill and tried courage of Mother Mary of Teresa of Jesus de Couëspel at Nice, but while awaiting her arrival, she sent Sister Mary of the Annunciation Regaudiat to fill the vacant post in Paris. This religious succeeded in restoring the failing courage of the Sisters and the benevolence of their friends.

She succeeded in conciliating Mme. de Lamartine, who took great interest in the children of the Good Shepherd. M. de Lamartine also visited the house, bringing with him the Prefect of Macon, and was much delighted with everything he saw. The Archbishop of Paris also came, presided at a function, gave a discourse to the Community, and promised his protection. In short, prosperity was restored to the house in Paris, and joy to the Mother House at Angers, to the Foundress especially, to whom this foundation was always a matter of special solicitude.

The good Mother wrote on the 11th February—

“ ‘The obedient man shall speak of victories.’ ”

“This, my dear Sister Mary of St. Clement, is exactly your experience, and your letter of the 9th does indeed fill me with consolation. Go to Mother Sophia for advice about everything. I understand, even better than you, all she can do for you. The good Jesuit Fathers rejoice to hear she is taking an interest in our works. I love her dearly in God.”

She thoroughly understood the saintly character and large-hearted charity of Mother Sophia, the Superior of the Couvent des Oiseaux, and thought her advice would probably be a main cause of success for her daughters. The house she directed was pervaded by such a truly Christian spirit, her reputation was so firmly established in the best Parisian circles, that the mere fact of her friendship was a favour from on high.

She had a great admiration, both for Mother Mary

of St. Euphrasia and for her work, and, when any religious of the Good Shepherd chanced to pass through Paris, thought it an honour to have them as guests. So early as 1837 she had written to the Superior at Nancy, Mother Mary St. John of the Cross, "Whenever any religious of the Good Shepherd pass through Paris, do not let them forget a certain little bird-cage, and that the birds in it will always have a glad welcome for them." This sisterly hospitality was often accepted; Mother Pelletier herself frequently stayed at the Oiseaux, finding both pleasure and edification in conversing with the Superior.

Thanks to Mother-General's zeal and that of the local Superior, the foundation in Paris began to gain favour, and protectors gathered around it. The name of each new protector was hailed with joy and gratitude at Angers. The Duke of Crillon was so kind when he called, that the Superior said "nothing could describe it." On another occasion M. Dubuquoi brought the religious the diploma of the Confraternity of our Lady of the Seven Dolours. The Archbishop, accompanied by Mgr. Gros, visited the house, preached to the children, spoke words of kind encouragement to the nuns, and promised his protection. All such news awoke an echo in the heart of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia. She was so grateful for every token of kindly feeling towards her daughters, so deeply moved thereby, that it seemed as if whatever was done to one of her houses was done to herself. Nothing,

therefore, could exceed her joy when she heard that Gregory XVI. had visited her monastery of the Holy Cross in Rome.

"Let your soul rejoice and bless the Lord with us for the great grace He has just vouchsafed us, and of which none but a holy hand should write." Thus did the Superior of that convent write to her on the 7th February 1842. "Yesterday at 11 o'clock the Sovereign Pontiff visited us. Just when every one in the house was engaged in her charge we were informed that the Holy Father was waiting at the enclosure door. Oh, my Mother, it was indeed a surprise. We all went down and fell at his feet. Then the prelates who accompanied him told us to rise, and he came with us to our reception-room. He said to us, 'Well, my children, this is the Pope; you were so desirous of seeing him, and now you know he does not forget you.' He questioned us about our penitents and Preservation children, went over the whole house, talking meantime with the warmest interest about everything concerning the Congregation. We asked him for a blessing for your charity, and he replied, 'I bless her and the Mother House.'"

Every smallest detail of His Holiness's visit was related to Mother St. Euphrasia, her correspondents being well aware that no circumstance connected with the first appearance of the Vicar of Christ in one of the houses of the Good Shepherd could fail to interest her. A young professed Sister told her about the procession through the house; how the Pope, with

the professed Sisters, went first, the Cardinals after them, and, last of all, the novices ; how in the garden they passed a good lay Sister novice with an apron on, not quite so white as the occasion required, who, recognising the Holy Father, rushed forwards to throw herself at his feet ; how one of the Cardinals, through whose protection she had come to the Good Shepherd, gave her the kindest greeting. Before leaving, the Holy Father knelt long before the Blessed Sacrament, and once more gave the nuns his blessing.

It seems the lot of religious Communities to excite the animosity of the wicked, who see in the open profession of a holy life their own condemnation ; but the privilege of arousing this animosity seemed to belong peculiarly to the Good Shepherd. It is an Order which not only preaches the evangelical precepts by their practice, but has for its special aim the rescue of souls from the power of the devil and from the corruption of the world. It was often exposed to attacks from bad newspapers and other evil agencies. A Community which rescued souls from such misery was an attractive theme for infidel demagogues, haranguing about liberty and advocating license. Against such enemies as these, ever on the watch for a pretext for attack, Mother Pelletier had often to act on the defensive.

In February 1842, one of the penitents, feigning illness, deceived the Mistress, and was allowed to go up to the dormitory by herself. She then took the sheets off her bed, and let herself down through the

window into the street. The alarm was given to the *tourière* Sisters, the girl was brought back, kindly received by the Mother, expressed sorrow for what she had done, and asked to be forgiven. But this simple affair was laid hold of by some ill-disposed local newspapers, and a romance woven out of it. The Community was accused of keeping a prison where dungeons and torture were in use, to escape from which a wretched girl had flung herself out of the window: it was the Bastille revived, and justice ought to interfere. In short, lies, calumny, abuse were showered on the Good Shepherd.

M. de Neuville, a faithful friend in good and evil fortune, wrote to encourage and console the Mother under this trial. A certain democratic local journal, called the *Precursor of the West*, went so far as to attack the relics of St. Philomena and also Father Ferrari, the historian of that virgin martyr.

At last the Superior of the Community, M. Rénier, advised Mother Foundress to defend the honour of the Institute by taking legal measures against the paper. The lawyer she employed was M. Proust, then in the full vigour of his life and talents, who so successfully proved the complete innocence of the Sisters that the editor was obliged to sue for terms from Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia.

It must always be painful to be misunderstood and attacked when one is guiltless of any fault, but to have one's devoted labours for the welfare of others misinterpreted is still harder to bear; to spend and be

spent, night and day, for the sole good of one's neighbour, and then to have this very work made the subject of false accusation, as if it were some guilty speculation, is the greatest trial a devoted heart can undergo; to persevere under such circumstances in the ministry of unselfish charity, to continue to love it, requires superhuman virtue.

Those who regard everything from the standpoint of faith have always a deep sense of their own responsibility, and this feeling never weighed more heavily on Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia than when any heavy misfortune befell her beloved flock: to feel one's own heart failing under the weight of sorrow, yet to know that one has to be the support of all who surround one, is among the great trials attending posts of authority.

On the 29th March 1842, in the midst of the celebration of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's feast (deferred because of Easter), she was suddenly informed that several of her youngest daughters, who had ventured into a boat kept for fishing, had been upset in a pond and three drowned. There was general consternation in the convent, and many expressions of condolence from the outer world and from other Communities. The Mother's heart was cut to the quick, but she had the consolation of knowing that the victims of the disaster had that morning been to confession and Communion. To religion alone could she turn for support, others meanwhile turning to her to find that she had nothing but tears to give. A

mother, suddenly bereaved of dear ones, and surrounded by weeping children, yet conscious of her helplessness to console, suffers one of the sorest trials a kind and sympathetic heart like that of Mother St. Euphrasia can undergo.

A crowd had rushed to the rescue at the first cries for help, and two soldiers had thrown themselves into the water to try and save the drowning Sisters. To each of these soldiers the Mother gave a gold watch containing an inscription commemorating the date and event.

Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia occupied so large a share of the hearts and minds of her daughters, that when, out of obedience, they had to leave her, they suffered from home sickness as it were. Deprived of her presence and words they missed a sustaining influence. On the 14th June 1842, Mother Teresa of Jesus de Couëspel wrote to her from Paris, "It is just two days since we parted. My tender Mother, I am still looking for you everywhere. I cannot get accustomed to not seeing you, although we had you only for three days. On our way back from the *diligence*, your farewell lingered in my heart with a sadness which I could not overcome. When I got back to the Community I found our Sisters like ourselves. We went to dinner sad at heart."

In the joyousness of her own devotedness, the eager spirit of her own love for the work, the simplicity of her trust in Divine Providence, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia lifted up the souls of her daughters, upon the strong pinions of her own faith, towards God and

the works done for His sake. It was not the authority of her commands which her Sisters felt, it was the living flame of her zeal which kindled their hearts; her very presence inspired them with devotedness. She had so supernatural an authority over her religious—even the oldest or those highest in office—that she could withhold permissions, even such as might be reasonably expected, apparently without leaving a trace of bitter feeling in their souls. Mother de Couëspel, for instance, once asked leave to pay a visit to her brother-in-law, M. de Banville, at the Château de Rosel, in order to arrange some business matters there with her mother and the rest of her family for the special advantage of the Community. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia refused her request. This refusal, far from causing the least vexation in Mme. de Couëspel, drew from her the following letter filled with tender affection and gratitude: “The Lord has in store great consolation for my soul in the tender charity which He, who is our good Master, puts into yours. Over and over again did we kiss your dear letter of the 17th inst. before reading it. Everything you say there is so wise, so plainly from God, that while I read your words I felt that my life and strength in the Lord came back to me, the life which is inseparably bound with you in the bonds of Divine charity. Oh, love, love of Jesus! how powerful thou art! Pray for me, you who are the soul of my soul. The Lord attaches special grace to everything dictated by your tender affection for me.”

Mme. de Couëspel wrote several letters each week to the Mother-General in order to keep up the closest possible union with her. Every little event in the life at the convent in Paris, visitors, retreats, no matter what—form the topics of these letters. In one of them she speaks of a visit from M. Regnier, just appointed Bishop of Angoulême, who called as Superior of the Good Shepherd, and was very kind and fatherly in his manner. Mme. de Couëspel remarks that she thinks he gains by being better known, and enlarges upon his benevolence, which she had not quite appreciated before. Other visitors to the convent were the Bishop of Poitiers and Father Chaignon, whose admiration for Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia made him a friend of her house in Paris.

CHAPTER V

FOUNDATIONS IN ITALY AND AMERICA

1842

Foundation of the convents at Genoa and Lyons—Consecration of Mgr. Angebault—Foundation at Louisville in America—Mother Pelletier's joy—Her ideas on missions—Voyage of the missionaries—Letters of Mother Pelletier.

ITALY had quickly appreciated the beauty of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's work. The favour of the Catholic upper and lower classes throughout the peninsula was secured by Papal approbation, and by the foundation of houses in Rome.

The King of Sardinia opened his dominions to the Order, and would have been pleased to see its houses established in all the principal towns of his kingdom. Genoa, which, with its fine seaport, trade, and beautiful neighbourhood, stands in the first rank of Italian cities, was one of the earliest to welcome Mme. Pelletier's daughters. A wealthy marquess, who had founded a refuge there, wished, before his death, to hand it over to the Good Shepherd.

Accordingly, Mother Foundress sent Mme. de Couëspel with a lay Sister from Nice, but the marquess died two days before their arrival. Nothing daunted, however, they asked some people of the lower

class for hospitality. They were in these lodgings for several months, until, through Cardinal Tatini's powerful protection, and the devotedness of his Vicar-General, Mgr. Gualco, a house of their own was provided, in which they gradually established themselves for their work with the charitable aid of several noble families, notably the Pallavicini, the Spinola, the Marguerita, and of Father Ferrari, S.J.

The Good Shepherd prospered at Genoa. The convent in which the Community finally settled, stands on one of the highest hills surrounding the town, and overlooks the blue waters of the Mediterranean; the view is beautiful, and one that raises the mind to God.

The tree of the Good Shepherd, prolific in fruits more golden, and of sweeter fragrance than that of Italy's orange trees, took root beneath the sunny skies of the Mediterranean. The house was hardly bought before postulants presented themselves; the first of that beautiful land to join the Missionary Seminary of the Good Shepherd, and add their harmonious language to its divers tongues, the first Italian contingent in the ranks of those preparing under Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's directions for foreign service. Since then postulants have presented themselves in numbers invariably animated with the spirit of religious life, chiefly from Tuscany. The Levant was their destined field of labour, as Italian colonies are to be found in every town of the Mediterranean seaboard.

When among her novices of divers nationalities, Mother St. Euphrasia had such graciousness of manner that each vied with her companions in showing the most loving submission. In ordinary worldly intercourse it is difficult simultaneously to please English, French, Germans, and Italians, with their very opposite national idiosyncracies. But Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia had solved the problem. The English novices found in her a gravity, a religious respect for traditions, a strict observance of every detail of propriety in conduct and conversation, in complete conformity with their highest ideal of an English-born religious. The Italians found in her the untiring zeal, the saintly joy, the holy enthusiasm of which their own budding vocations contained the germ. Grace doubtless was the power which welded together into one spirit and one affection so many persons of different nations, joining them one to another for the service of the Church and of souls.

Mgr. de Bonald, when Bishop of Puy, had sent for religious of the Good Shepherd to come to that town, and at Lyons, as Archbishop, wished to establish the Order there also. He had always shown great admiration for Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's scheme, and, when he applied to her for, what he called "shepherdesses for the stray sheep of his new flock," he had no difficulty in obtaining them from her. It was in July 1842 that she sent to Lyons a little company of her daughters, poor in the goods of this world, but rich in zeal and devotedness, to whom she recom-

mended childlike trust in God and gratitude to benefactors. Some ladies interested in the work received them; also M. Pater, Parish Priest of the Vaise quarter, who conducted them to the Château des Battières-sur-St. Irénée. Their first care in their new abode was to make it as like the convent at Angers as possible, so, following the example of their Mother, they began by making a little chapel, where the Holy Sacrifice could be offered, and they could have our Lord under their roof. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, when beset with sorrows and difficulties from which there seemed no path of escape, used always to go to the Blessed Sacrament, where, wrapt in angelic prayer, she would pour out her troubles before our Lord; rising from this converse with God, she would come forth calm and strengthened, and very often with unhopèd for light guiding her to practical decisions. A religious house without the Blessed Sacrament was to her inconceivable. Her daughters had all learned from her that their first step towards organising a new house should be the arrangement of a chapel, though never so humble.

Lyons, the city of missionaries and of the propagation of the faith, which, since the days when the hillsides of Fourvières ran with the blood of St. Pothinus and his companions, has ever ranked with the most Catholic cities of France, was sure not to be behind hand in appreciating the apostolic zeal of the religious of the Good Shepherd. They were soon surrounded by affectionate and charitable assistance. Cardinal

de Bonald often visited them, promised his protection, and encouraged them.

Five months had elapsed since, by the death of Mgr. Paysant, Angers had been widowed of its Bishop, and the Good Shepherd of its Superior, when news arrived of the appointment of his successor, M. Angebault, a Priest of Nantes, Vicar-General to Mgr. de Hercé. The new Bishop was fifty-two years old; he had been ordained Priest at Angers, and made his first studies at the little seminary of Beaupréau, in Anjou; great, therefore, was the rejoicing in Angers at his appointment. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia lost no time in writing to tell Mgr. de Hercé of her joy, and received from him in reply the following kind and almost playful letter:—

“NANTES, *March 17th, 1842.*

“MADAME AND DEAR REV. MOTHER,—My heart was deeply moved by your kind manner of expressing your own and your daughters’ joy in the designation of your excellent Bishop. Ere he went to Paris he had not quite made up his mind to accept, so I denied myself the pleasure of answering your letter until I heard from him of his decision.

“No doubt my relations with him will be very agreeable, but they can never be more so than they were with both his venerable predecessors, who always showed me the greatest kindness.

“You will understand, my dear Rev. Mother, that I must always exercise much reserve in complying

with your kind desire that I should visit you. I must never forget that I am simply an auxiliary called in for the sake of your German and English novices, whom, with your kind leave, I always call daughters of mine. But I must no longer speak in this way of your Italian daughters, for M. Angebault has travelled in Italy, and if he does not speak the language, at least understands it. So when he comes to visit you, you need not expect any cold looks from him; when he sees those pleasant English and German faces, he will not think he is looking at descendants of the Black Prince or of Marlborough, or nieces of the Frederic and Eugene whose fathers and uncles defeated the French! Mgr. Paysant seemed to conjure up those illustrious shades of the past in your beautiful enclosure, and invest with them the pious young persons who, with all their amiable qualities, remind me only of Miranda, Juliet, and Isabella. I am sure Mgr. Angebault will regard them in the same light, and not cause them that terror which amuses me so much. He and I will come to you together some day, my dear Mother, and for me it will be a gala day. You will have a good Bishop. It would be a great loss to him if M. Regnier were taken from him; but I very much regret that the refusal of the Bishop of Mans prevents his going to take his place—the see could not have been better filled.

“In September at latest, I hope, dear Rev. Mother, to be able to give myself the pleasure of paying you my respects. I shall thoroughly enjoy the little expedi-

tion. Please kindly mention this to your daughters, who are also those of my heart, and to whom I am bound by every tie of the tenderest and most respectful affection, and for yourself, dear mother, accept the respectful homage of the same sentiments.

“✠ J. FRANÇOIS,
Bishop of Nantes.”

The Good Shepherd now held so important a position that no Bishop visiting Angers thought of leaving without inspecting a work so peculiarly adapted to contemporary requirements.

Mgr. de Hercé, who consecrated the new Bishop, stayed at the Good Shepherd, and found the work prospering greatly. The English novices, to whom he had formerly given the veil, had been the means of attracting some of their compatriots to the Order. The Vicar-Apostolic of the London district, Mgr. Griffiths, was also at the Good Shepherd at this time, and Mr. Robson, Superior of the convent in London.

The day after the Bishop's consecration, Mgr. Angebault, accompanied by Mgr. Bouvier, Bishop of Mans, Mgr. Soyer, Bishop of Luçon, Mgr. Regnier, Bishop of Angoulême, and others, came to the Good Shepherd to visit Mgr. de Hercé and the Community. All these Bishops were unanimous in their admiration of the marvels accomplished by Mother Pelletier since her first arrival in Angers. It had been her wish to make the reception of her new Bishop as solemn as possible, to mark her religious respect for him as the

representative of Jesus Christ. The choir was decorated and brilliantly lighted, the altars decked and covered with candles. In the Community Room verses in honour of the new Bishop and Dr. Griffiths were sung. The Mother's piety was characterised by this love of honouring our Lord Jesus Christ in His Bishops and Priests, and she was very happy. Poor as she was, she always contrived to give a certain magnificence to her reception of any Bishops who came to the Good Shepherd, and on this occasion the air of festivity which pervaded the whole house published the joy of the Superior, to whom it was a day of great happiness.

Mgr. Flaget, having transferred his see to Louisville, lost no time in carrying out the plan he had entertained ever since his voyage to France, and his conversations with Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia. Being unaware of Mgr. Regnier's designation to the see of Angoulême, he wrote asking him to send out some nuns of the Good Shepherd to his diocese. The request was handed on by Mgr. Regnier to the new Bishop of Angers, who hastened to grant it, at the same time telling Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia that before long she would have an American Noviciate. "You will have to send out another colony to form a Noviciate; for I now see that the work will extend indefinitely."

With the heart of a Carmelite, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia had also the true missionary vocation, and, as she saw the horizon of her work widening, her joy

was boundless. She had dreamed of distant missions, at last she was to have them ; yearned to redeem captives, she was now to redeem them. She had longed to send out her daughters, like the first Apostles, to carry the glad tidings to the nations, now the New World was opening to their apostolic zeal.

At the chapter, held to nominate the religious for the American mission, she gave free utterance to her apostolic fervour.

“ Our Lord Jesus Christ, standing in the midst of His Apostles, after His Resurrection, said to them, ‘ Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations.’ Divine words, which, in a later age, St. Ignatius repeated to his society, more fervent, more generous than ours. The number of his fathers was but scanty : one he sent to Portugal, another to Spain, others to France, Northern Europe, the East Indies, and Japan, and then he cried out, ‘ Oh, why have not I many more faithful servants to immolate to the glory of God ? ’ ”

“ St. Vincent did the like, while his Order was yet in its infancy. And to-day, my daughters, the same invitation comes to you, the same words are spoken. It is not a year hence, not next month, not in a few days, but now, that the glorious plan of your future labour is to be unfolded to you.

“ And you, my younger children, you but just entered into the holy ark, deem yourselves happy to have witnessed this beautiful spectacle.

“ Only six weeks more, my dear daughters, and those among you who shall be nominated will be baptizing

and catechising poor savage children, brought to you from great distances.

“‘Come, come, Sisters,’ writes the holy Bishop of Louisville, ‘the work I offer you is worthy of your vocation.’ Contemplate the Institute, my dear daughters; see it forming beneath distant skies in a virgin soil, where the harvest is great but the labourers few. All of you, by the union of your prayers and co-operation of your work, will be baptizing with your Sisters in America; you will be with them in those great forests where they will seek wandering souls. If our sisters, to use the language held by twenty-two Bishops, change the face of the whole country of the New World, you will share in their zeal, their work, their merit. But you who stay behind, to you do we look for help in perfecting our dear Novitiate by your regularity, your union; for there lies the future of our Institute, our hope for our missions.”

The first religious sent to America belonged to five different nationalities. On the eve of their departure, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia assembled the Community in the choir for the ceremony of the washing of feet as used in the Seminaries of the Foreign Missions. She was the first to kiss the feet of the missionary religious, and while doing so, with an impulse of faith, uttered the words, “How beautiful are the feet of him that bringeth glad tidings.”

At the close of this ceremony, the religious, by her desire, renewed their vows in order to start upon their new life in the rekindled fervour of their noviceship.

An indescribable enthusiasm pervaded the whole house; every religious in it would have been glad to go to the missions. The outfits were the gift of Mme. d'Andigné, who, besides other things, gave bed-clothes, and the chalice first used in the chapel. Other offerings for the first penitents of the New World were contributed by charitable persons of Anjou.

The newspapers published eloquent accounts of all these proceedings, with the effect of attracting a certain number of postulants drawn to missionary work.

The moment of parting was hard to those left behind, hard to those who went. The Mother, moved to the heart at sight of her departing daughters, upon whom she might be gazing for the last time, bracing herself up, said energetically, "My daughters, go, in the name of obedience." Then the five missionary Sisters started, Mother Assistant accompanying them to Havre.

Then the cloister door closed upon them, and Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia went back to her task of forming the religious and apostolic life in her novices. She made the departure for America the subject of the following discourse, one of the most fervent she ever uttered:—

"To-day, my dear daughters, we will talk about America. We will suppose that all of you are starting for that country, and speak only of the mission there.

"We are struck, in the first place, by the power which lies in our fourth vow, for is it not true that it

alone leads us forth to missions? We need not, indeed, go to distant shores to practise charity; that we can do everywhere. Charity is more secure in retirement than in the busy scenes to which our Sisters are going in America. Still less is it the vow of obedience; for in virtue of holy obedience, you may be sent about in France or Europe; but we could not oblige you to go to the New World. It is only your own inclination which takes you there. Now this inclination, what other source has it but your fourth vow? But some of you may say, Why go so far to seek souls: are there not plenty of them everywhere? Yes, my dear daughters, so there are; but in America there are more than anywhere else. The reason for this is quite plain: no other country is so neglected. It is possible to travel for a hundred leagues there without meeting one priest.

“The young people whom you will have converted and brought to Baptism, will, in their turn, feel impelled in like manner to try and save souls even as you went forth to seek them out. Our vocation will therefore suit them better than that of Carmel or the Sacred Heart. And this is why there will be as many novices in Louisville in four years’ time as there are here.

“Here are the two mottoes you must write upon your leaflets, you who are destined to missionary work: ‘Go, therefore, and teach all nations; baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;’ and next, these words of St. Paul,

‘I became all things to all men that I might save all.’ Follow this example of the great Apostle, and be all things to all men. This is a very important point. One missionary almost ruined a whole mission, simply because he refused to sit on the ground as the savages did. As for penitents, you must use every precaution to avoid frightening them. You will never win them over except by humility. And among other things there is one I should like particularly to mention—their food. Never let anything appear on the table which is not prepared according to the usage of the country. There is nothing more difficult to give up than the food one has been used to. You will have to accustom yourselves to their cooking.

“Another thing, especially for our American Sisters; oh! my daughters, ransom slaves; fill your classes with them. They are sold for crime; there are hundreds of them in the markets—whenever you have any money, spend it for this; they are souls snatched from hell. I need not so much as recommend to you to make no difference whether those you rescue are black or white, whether penitents or children. All have souls for which a God shed all His Blood. I assure you, moreover, that blacks are capable of much affection and gratitude. I should be very glad to see American novices at Angers; it would make us love their country more and more.”

All the friends of the Community rejoiced in the foundation in America, as plainly indicating our Lord’s intention in its regard. Mgr. Regnier (Bishop of

Angoulême) wrote to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, on the 16th October 1842, "I am delighted at the way in which the important Kentucky affair has ended. My prayers shall go across the seas with your good Sisters. Though distant, this foundation gives me no feeling of anxiety, because it is made entirely according to the rules of Christian prudence and religious obedience." The previsions of Mgr. Regnier were fully realised, and Mother Pelletier's hopes were far surpassed by the success of the foundations in America. The good Mother, in truth, took possession of the New World by means of this little colony of religious, who, abandoning all care of themselves into the hands of God, crossed the seas, bearing with them the apostolic spirit of the Good Shepherd into the midst of this new country, which gave the most brilliant hopes for the future welfare of religion.

With the most maternal solicitude therefore Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia followed, in her fervent prayers, the steps of her daughters who, from the peaceful seclusion of the cloister, had, in spite of dangers of all kinds, courageously undertaken this great work for souls. She begged them to write to her frequently, that she might be united with them as closely as possible. From New York and Louisville she received long letters from them, in which they related all the events and emotions of this journey of nearly two months. They left Havre on the 16th October in a sailing vessel, and, through stress of

weather and contrary winds, had a bad voyage. Many were their reflections upon the power of God and the helplessness of man as, with only a plank separating them from the fathomless abyss of the ocean, they watched the stars pursuing their peaceful course in the calm, unmoved sky, above the agitation and trouble of the world. They passed through New York, and beheld, with astonishment, the feverish activity of the population, hurried along on the torrent of business, careless of human life and of accidents, in the rush for wealth. These experiences of men and nature forcibly brought home to them the sense of God's immutable power and man's wretchedness, when carried away by the inordinate love of worldly things. The beauty of their vocation, the pious remembrance of the Institute, sentiments to which they were always keenly alive, seemed to find embodiment in the verses sung at the Mother House at the moment of their departure:—

“ When shall we see our France again,
 Our childhood's cradle,
 Home of peace, joy, innocence ?
 The Good Shepherd, object of our abiding love ?

Banished from home,
 Our tears for Euphrasia are unceasing ;
 Her memory will last with life ;
 To speak of her is our constant love.

Echoes of America,
 Hear our pious songs ;
 Bear them to Sion,
 The source of our eternal love.”

On the journey to Louisville, the Bishops, in the several dioceses they passed through, welcomed them to American soil: Dr. Hughes at New York, Dr. Kenrick at Philadelphia, Dr. O'Connor at Pittsburgh, Dr. Purcell at Cincinnati, and finally, at Louisville itself, Bishop Flaget and his coadjutor, Dr. Chabrat.

Each Bishop, at the sight of the little phalanx of apostles sent out to conquer souls to grace, was desirous of claiming a house of the Good Shepherd for his diocese. The seed was cast into the furrow; soon the harvest would ripen.

Meantime Mother Pelletier had not waited to receive a letter from her daughters in America before sending them such words of encouragement and strengthening gladness as only a letter from home, received in a distant land can bring. Her first letter is most affectionate.

“FROM OUR MONASTERY AT ANGERS,
November 11th, 1842.”

“MY BELOVED CHILDREN, MY GLORY AND MY CROWN, —Where are you, my good Mary of the Angels, and you, my Sister of St. Louis of Gonzaga, my dearest Sister of St. Joseph, my Sisters St. Marcella and St. Reparata? You are in America! that Divine mission, the object of our heart's love. Zeal, obedience have carried you two thousand leagues away from us! It is now twenty-five days since you left, and, oh! my poor children! how many more before me hear from

you? It will be a great day to us when our chapter shall meet at the feet of the Blessed Virgin, who is keeping her American daughters in the tabernacle of her heart.

"Were you ill on the way, my angel? I am afraid Sisters St. Louis of Gonzaga and St. Joseph will have gone through much suffering, and perhaps all five of you at the same time; but the love of Jesus will have made everything sweet. Our prayers, good wishes, Communions have followed you continually. We have been counting the days and watching the weather. Ah, how have we besought Him, Who calms the troubled winds and waves, to save you from storms! How thankful we shall be to hear all about your voyage—your holy voyage, during which, I am very sure, my dear daughters, God gave you great graces. He would surely speak to our Xaviers when leading them to distant shores.

"Did you stay some days in New York, and what do you think of that dear America? Did you, above all other graces, receive the benediction of your holy Bishop? Oh, tell him, from me, that I prostrate myself at his feet, that he may deign to bless me and every one of our dear flocks! Oh, what happiness to me that he should be a founder of our holy Order! We shall pray day and night for his preservation. Be guided by his wisdom; he is a Saint. Our Holy Father the Pope will be very glad that the work of the Good Shepherd is in his hands; he loves him much, and himself told me so. Be his consolation

and ours, my beloved daughters; strive diligently to become interior religious; above all, avoid discouragement and sadness. Here, my dear, my tenderly loved daughters, I will quote to you the words of the Apostle St. Paul: 'Rejoice in the Lord always.' You are very happy to have been chosen for this noble mission; your companions envy you; every one wants to go and see you in America, to go out and help you some day. You will certainly see another colony sent, my dearest children. Had you the happiness of seeing the Bishop-coadjutor? Please present to him our respects, and also to Mgr. Flaget's niece express our affection—she is so kind!

"The whole town is on the look-out for news of you. The clergy are all praying for you. Our Sisters love you. Our kindest Mme. d'Andigné prays for you continually, and sends you her love, as we do, a thousand times.

"Farewell, my beloved children, farewell! My soul cleaves to your souls. Ah! how sweet the union is. I bless you, and am with you in spirit in America. I make a little sign of the Cross upon the forehead of each. I embrace you, and charge you to show great courage. Remember, my dear daughters, that we have intrusted you with a most sacred deposit, even our beloved Institute, which you carry in your arms; let it be seen of men in all its beauty. I am, in the Most Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, with much tenderness, your loving Mother,

"MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA."

And, then, when the first news came from her daughters in America, how her heart overflowed with joy! God had guided them across the ocean to the desired goal of their apostleship. This is her reply:—

“FROM OUR MONASTERY AT ANGERS.

“‘I will send My Angel before thee.’

“My good, devoted, loving daughters, the Angel of the Lord, by the Divine protection of Mary, has saved you from great dangers, and will always save you.

“I knelt before the Holy Child Jesus, and put your dear, interesting letter into His hands, after I had tenderly kissed it. Oh, how much I thank you, my dearest daughters, for having written from New York. With what joy we received your letter, kissed it, and carried it to the Crib.

“My poor children, how it has moved me, and how much you have suffered! You have been crucified in heart and body. My good Mary of the Angels, I shed tears when I read of your struggles; but still I envy your lot. Happy daughters of our most beautiful mission. And you, my beloved Mary of St. Louis of Gonzaga, you who have given us details more precious than gold, you who were still so suffering, so overwhelmed, how much I love you in God, my very good daughter. And you, my little Sister St. Joseph, dear to our hearts, you were gentle and loving in the midst of all your sufferings. The Holy Child Jesus has blessed you, and Monseigneur d’Angoulême

also. He thinks of you as his daughter. Do write him a long letter in English, and another, my good Mary of St. Louis of Gonzaga, in French, *in the name of your little Community*. Tell him about your holy Bishop, whom he loves so much. And, oh! write too to our worthy prelate at Angers, who has been so good, and then to our good Parish Priest of St. Jacques, a letter six sheets long, with a few words enclosed in it for his curate. They will read them everywhere.

“But now to return to you two, Sisters St. Reparata and St. Marcella, who are so dear to us in God, and whom, together with our three other American Mothers, we embrace. Courage, faithful band! fight the good fight, win victory upon victory. Be the joy of the Church and of our hearts, and the honour of our holy Congregation. Oh, my dearest daughters, what pleasure you will give me (when you can do it) by writing to our dear foundations. You would do them such good, but mind, only when you can. Please tell us all about the two first American penitents you are to receive, their names, character, appearance, and where they come from. Speak of us also to them, our dear and truly beloved children. My dear doves, I have a great secret for you; no one in all France but myself knows it yet. Oh, pray much. Yesterday we had a letter from the Bishop of Algiers,¹ conjuring us, by the adorable Blood of Jesus Christ, to give him twelve religious, to make a foundation at Hippo, near the tomb of our father St. Augustine. What a beauti-

¹ Mgr. Dupuch.

ful work, if intrusted to us! But you, my zealous missionaries, are beforehand with us. You five have been the first to pass beyond the limits of Europe. The love of God and of our holy Institute has carried you to America. I think, by this time, you must be in Louisville. We are longing for another letter from you, as the hart panteth after the fountains of waters. It will be the delight of our benefactors and chaplains, all of whom send you affectionate messages.

"Mme. d'Andigné loves you tenderly. She is the best of mothers to us.

"Good-bye, faithful band; increase, multiply, sanctify, and people the American land. Every day I shall seek you and find you in the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Your most affectionate Mother,

"MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA."

CHAPTER VI

ZEAL FOR THE MISSIONS—ALGIERS

[1842-1843]

Mother Pelletier's journey to Angoulême—Trials in the house—M. de Neuville's letter—Affiliation to our Lady of Victories—M. Eugène Bosé—Mgr. Dupuch—His request for religious in Algiers—Their departure from Angers—Mother de Stransky.

THE dauntless energy, the supernatural zeal of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia in her work, influenced those about her with her own living, joyous spirit. Finding, therefore, that her presence in her new houses had an encouraging effect, and gave an impetus to the classes in course of formation, she was often to be seen taking the road to some new foundation, especially those passing through hard times. Thus she went, in September 1842, to Paris, where the convent, yet scarcely established, was undergoing great trials. Her visit there was a source of blessings to her daughters. The Nuncio, Mgr. Garibaldi, anxious to show her the great interest he took in the Good Shepherd, came and said Mass, visited all the classes afterwards, and promised often to repeat his visit, and to send accounts of the Sisters' devotedness to the Pope, "for," said he pleasantly, "if I don't come, you will be com-

plaining of me to the Pope, and he believes every word you say.”

In October 1842, Mother Foundress started for Angoulême at M. Regnier’s request, to choose a suitable house for the foundation there. In leaving Angers an accident happened in which her spirit of faith and her charity were remarkably manifested. The diligence had hardly started when, being overloaded, it upset and fell to the side where she was seated. She fell underneath two of her fellow-travellers, and lay beneath their weight half-an-hour before relief came, showing the greatest resignation all the time. While the coach was in the very act of falling over, she was heard reciting the Act of Contrition and the *Memorare*; and, when the people who rushed up to render assistance had with great difficulty rescued her, her first thought was for her companions, her next, was to give all the money she had with her to her deliverers. They refused it, and one of them, whose daughter had been at the Good Shepherd, said, “It is I who am indebted to you: for my daughter, who was the source of such anxiety to me, you have changed into an angel.”

There was nothing for the Mother to do after the accident but to return to the Good Shepherd; and, that she might avoid frightening her daughters by her unexpected reappearance, she went in by a small door and sent for Mother Assistant only. The driver of the coach was summoned before the courts on a charge of carelessness, but he was so well defended by

Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia that he was fully acquitted. In point of fact, although overloaded, there was no way of accounting for the accident where it took place, the road there being quite level. M. Regnier told the Mother he looked upon it as the work of the devil, to hinder her from waging war against him in a new foundation. The fall was no trifling matter, for the good Mother admitted to the doctor who attended her on her death-bed, that a pain in the side, from which she long suffered, had been caused by this accident.

After a few days' rest she started again for Angoulême. During her absence, some little girls, previously placed at the Good Shepherd by the Ladies of Charity, were removed to the care of the Augustinian nuns, under the pretext that the ladies could not visit them so often as they wished in a cloistered Community. This change was deeply felt among the Sisters. The Mother, however, well experienced in triumphing over vexations by reflecting that trials, instead of being the cause of failure, are rather a source of blessing to works begun in the Spirit of God, and in obedience to His Divine will, found means to reanimate her daughters' courage by establishing penitents in the quarters vacated by the little orphans, thus giving more space to other works in the house.

She thus often converted events, apparently the most untoward, into the very means of advancing God's work, and no obstacle man placed in her path availed to arrest her progress.

Meanwhile God blessed her with many consolations in the success of her foundations and the encouragements of His servants who had been her coadjutors in building up her work. Father Vaures thus came to see and congratulate her towards the end of 1842, bringing with him, from Rome, a novice, an elderly widow lady, the mother of Princess Cantacuzène.

M. de Neuville too was always a kind of mouth-piece for all other pious souls. "Your work," he says on one occasion, "is the delight of our sweet Saviour and of His dear Mother."—"I thank you," he says again, "for letting me have a share in the showers of grace that rain upon the Institute. I see with inward jubilation that your beautiful work stands firm among the afflictions of this life, and that nothing arrests its progress. It is like some pure stream which flows on among thorns and rocks."

Or he gracefully presents his compliments and good wishes for the Mother's feast :

"I have just given M. Mainguy the poor bouquet I had for you. I could not offer it to you yesterday. Poor as it is, pray accept it as a token of my affection. Accept also all my best and most hearty good wishes for your prosperity. When you have attained the age of Anna the Prophetess, may the Queen of Virgins grant you the grace she accorded to your glorious patron, St. Euphrasia, to whom, showing a splendid crown, she said, 'Behold thy reward ; in ten days thou shalt come to enjoy it for evermore.' May Mary, accompanied by virgins of the Good Shepherd, come

thus to you and conduct you to her abode where happiness awaits you. Amen."

In the same year he wrote to her again: "I present my most profound respects to Mme. d'Andigné, and, as her most unworthy fellow-labourer in the work of the Good Shepherd, I thank her for her noble and generous support of the house in which our sweet Saviour and His beloved Mother find their delight. May they bestow upon her length of days and better health." This sympathy and approbation, coming from a man of M. de Neuville's saintly character, were a great support to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia. She always carefully sought to interest in her work those esteemed as God's special servants. She had heard that M. Desgenettes, the curé of Notre Dame des Victoires, had obtained marvellous graces of sanctification through our Lady's intercession, and, having gone one day to pray in that sanctuary, she asked him for letters of aggregation to the Arch-confraternity he had established there. M. Desgenettes felt that this would be a powerful agency for the advancement of his work, and, in sending the letters of affiliation, he wrote to her as follows:—

"REV. MOTHER,—It is with great pleasure that I send you the letters of aggregation to the Arch-confraternity of the Most Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary, for the conversion of sinners. We shall grow stronger by the help of your prayers and aspirations; and I have not the least doubt that our dear

Mother, who is already so gracious, so generous to us, will grant to us, still more promptly and abundantly, the conversion of our poor erring brethren. When, in the Presence of God, dear Rev. Mother, you think of sinners, think of me as one of them, and pray for me, you and your holy daughters, for I am in great need of prayers."

From that time forward M. Desgenettes entertained a special admiration for the Good Shepherd, a work with an aim similar to that pursued by himself in the Archconfraternity of the Most Sacred Heart of Mary. By Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's commands, the Statutes of the Arch-confraternity, signed by Mgr. Angebault, were hung up in the convent; and, that the spirit of the association might pervade the Community, she ordained that an *Ave Maria* should be said daily, after Mass, and the Litanies of Loretto sung, at Benediction, on the first Sunday of every month, for the conversion of sinners.

The years of the Good Shepherd might now be counted by the increase of foundations. That of 1842 was a particularly happy one to the Mother, on account of the foundation at Louisville, in America; and, hardly had 1843 begun, than an appeal came from Africa, of such urgent character as to be irresistible to the zeal of her apostolic heart. The Bishop of Algiers, Mgr. Dupuch, wrote "beseeching her on his knees" (to quote his own words) to send a few of her religious out to his poor diocese. She

consented, and referred him to her Superior, Mgr. Angebault.

Her zeal opened new paths for her work all over the world. M. Eugène Boré, then only a simple layman, but afterwards to become Superior of the Lazarists, came to Angers on his return from Asiatic mission stations, and was invited to the Good Shepherd by Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, who drew from him an interesting account of his edifying journeys in Persia, Syria, and all over Turkey. She listened, with holy enthusiasm, to a minute report of the kind of labour these neglected countries would demand, and heard that in Angura (the ancient Ancyra) M. Boré had found more than 1400 Catholic women, ready to place themselves under the direction of religious, and some who even aspired to enter religion.

Here was the broad horizon of the East expanding to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's rejoicing zeal, and, in the future Superior of the Lazarists and Sisters of St. Vincent of Paul, she found an apostle fully capable of understanding her. He wrote to the Patriarchal Vicar of Constantinople, and gave him, first, an account of his own semi-diplomatic, semi-apostolic travels in the East, then laid before him a picture of the Good Shepherd at Angers, with its adaptability to the needs of the forsaken Christians of the world's most ancient churches. He was still a young man at this time (he was only thirty-five), and had already spent ten years of his life in trying to discover the best methods of teaching the Gospel in Eastern lands; and

in his zeal Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia found matter for both admiration and saintly emulation.

Meanwhile Mgr. Dupuch was urging his claims. He had once visited the Good Shepherd at Angers, on his way from Normandy to Bordeaux, where he was a canon of the Cathedral Chapter. While in the parlour with Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, he had happened to ask her if she knew of any altar to St. Philomena in the neighbourhood, a saint to whom he owed many graces. He had been very pleasantly surprised when she told him she had the same devotion, and that relics of the Saint were under the high altar of the chapel. After this he never forgot the convent which harboured the relics of his holy patroness.

In 1840 he, and the Abbé Suchet, were in Paris together, at a hotel, where Mother Mary of the Angels Levoyer, Superior at Lille, was staying, while temporarily visiting Paris. He spoke to her of his wish for a house of the Good Shepherd at Algiers, and of the good it might be expected to do; and then, to her delight, ensued a friendly discussion between him and the Abbé Suchet, as to the town where it ought to be established, Mgr. Dupuch claiming it for Algiers, and Mgr. Suchet for Constantine, where he exercised the functions of his holy ministry.

In 1843 Mgr. Dupuch received permission from Mgr. Angebault to make the foundation. Every house belonging to the Community contributed something towards the mission, and Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia had no difficulty in finding missionaries ready to be

sent to Africa, the home of St. Augustine, the holy father of the Order.

She made this foundation the subject of the following address to her daughters:—

“More than 1400 years ago, my dear daughters, our father, St. Augustine, composed the rules we observe, rules which are the admiration of the whole Church. It is centuries since any cloistered Order has existed in Africa, and for all these years the Sacred Offices have not been heard there. To us has fallen the lot of reviving them in that famous land of old.

“The worthy daughters of St. Vincent of Paul, and those of the Christian Doctrine, have landed before you on those distant shores; but neither of these Communities, admirable as both are, is cloistered or sings the Divine Office. For you, then, my dear daughters, has been reserved this better part. Your departure, for such a country, thrills all our hearts with joy.

“Four Latin doctors have enriched the Church with their writings, but St. Augustine is the one among them who wrote best and most. See the gentleness, the strength of his words! Nothing can be compared with the beauty of his works. Read our holy Rule, and see the unction contained in every line. To go no further than the first chapter: ‘Before all things let God be loved, and then our neighbour.’ He loved God so ardently, great Saint that he was! Oh, how would he rejoice now in our mission? I do not

for a moment doubt that his powerful prayers have contributed greatly to this grand enterprise. The people of the country, although barbarians, still cherish the memory of their Saint, and, especially, his love for souls is not forgotten among them. We read in his life that, having the desire to establish a Community at Hippo, he told his people of his project, and then appealed to them : ‘ Do my people desire it also ? ’ And, when they clapped their hands in token of approval, he said, ‘ I am satisfied ; the voice of the people is the voice of God.’

“ Hippo is destroyed, but the place where his tomb stood is still held in veneration ; and, only a short time ago, Mgr. Dupuch had built on the spot a little chapel, which has become a place of pilgrimage, not only to Catholics, but to the Arabs as well. You will see these places, my dear daughters, and the place where St. Augustine composed that admirable book known as his ‘ Confessions.’ You will then remember the fourth century, when many religious combated under the rule of the holy Bishop. Last night, and yet more this morning, the thought was with me, that our century will witness the revival of the primitive fervour of the African Church.

“ You are aware, my very dear daughters, that, generally speaking, you will be well received in Algeria. The Arabs, the Bedouin, like white, and will respect your religious dress. You will have many penitents, many souls to save.

“ How many noteworthy circumstances marked this

foundation. Mgr. Dupuch, the Bishop of Algiers, who asks for us, told us, that, when he was saying Mass, in our chapel, at the Altar of St. Philomena, the Saint told him that in our Congregation he would find religious fit for the works he wished to establish in Africa. These words pursued him, and doubtless it is the Saint's protection that has enabled him to carry out his plan, in spite of all the efforts of hell against it. Besides this, the Bishop of Angers has been, as it were, forced to hasten on this foundation. Yesterday morning a confidential person went to the Palace for an answer we had asked his Lordship to send us. 'Say to the Rev. Mother,' he said, 'that I have not time to write her so much as a line, but tell her to make her nominations, and in the evening I will call and confirm everything.'

"Then again—yesterday the money required for our Sisters' journey was 500 francs short; we did not know where to get this sum, and now it has just been sent to us quite unexpectedly.

"But, my dear daughters, do you wish for more, and more, of such signal graces? Well, then, in all things, observe our holy rules; sing the Office as appointed in the Directory, and remember these words of St. Augustine, 'Do not spoil the beauty of your canticles by the false notes of your life.' Be humble, like our Father St. Augustine, when, before his conversion, he used to go and ask to see St. Ambrose. He was sometimes obliged to wait, but, far from being rebuffed by this, he used only to regard himself as

unworthy to disturb the venerable prelate. It was his humility that made St. Ambrose foresee and predict, that he would be one day a great Saint. And these two lights of the Church have been ever since so blended that they shine together with one radiance.

“Afterwards St. Augustine received letters from St. Jerome, who, having in his desert solitude been prejudiced against him, wrote thus: ‘Because you are a Priest, because you are a clever man, because you are a Bishop, you would like to prevail over those who have gone before; but let me tell you that old oxen go more steadily than young ones.’ To which Augustine answered, ‘Would that I had the wings of a dove, that I might fly to you, who are my father in the faith.’

“Such, my dear daughters, is the humility of the Saints. They vie with one another in self-abasement. St. Peter greeted St. Paul with these words: ‘Hail, thou who art the Apostle of the Gentiles,’ and St. Paul answered: ‘Hail, thou who art the corner-stone of the Church, and the father of all the nations.’

“Be obedient, my dear daughters; remember that, when you were nominated for this mission, these words were said to you: ‘Daughters of obedience, go to Africa; go by obedience, stay by obedience.’ Oh, I conjure you, never weary of the mission, whatever difficulties it may present. Be confident, too, that the natives will respect you, and God will bless you. But once more, be humble, be obedient, following St. Augustine’s example.”

The little band of religious left for Africa on

March 30th 1843, under the direction of a young professed German Sister of remarkable character, Mlle. de Stransky. On leaving the Good Shepherd for the mission, she took the name of Sister Mary of St. Philomena.

This departure was as solemnly celebrated as that of the American Sisters. Mgr. Angebault came to the convent to bless the missionaries. Mme. d'Andigné gave them the sacred vessels for their chapel, as she had to their Sisters of Louisville. But still more affecting contributions were offered by the several classes, each of which (having caught the reflection of the Mother's spirit of charity and union, which, radiating from her and reigning over the house, made every one in it interested in the works of her apostleship) gave the Sisters the proceeds of their own handiwork. The novices gave for the sacristy, surplice, communion-cloth, alb, chasuble; the school children gave cruets; the penitents an altar-cloth. Thus, no member of the Community was without some share in the mission to the land of St. Augustine.

With a mother's tender solicitude for her daughters, to spare them a sleepless night, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia hid from them the day of their departure until it actually came. It was only announced to them in the chapel after Mass by the tones of the organ, and the notes of farewell hymns composed for the occasion. She was full of tender, motherly devices, to soften to them the pangs of separation, and they had hardly left the house than she wrote

a long letter to reach them at Toulon before their embarkation; heading it with these words:—

“To my very beloved, zealous, and perfectly submissive daughters of the African coast now in Toulon.” And then followed, “Children of obedience, go forth and conquer souls.”

The good Superior of the little company of African missionaries wrote to her mother, the Baroness de Stransky, describing to her the supernatural joy kindled in her by Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's burning words; she thanked her also for having made her learn, in childhood, several languages which, she thought, would probably be useful among the various nationalities inhabiting Algeria. The whole spirit of the Foundress seemed to have passed into this youthful Superior. She tells her mother of the tokens of God's goodness which surround her path, of the charity of which she is the object, of the virtues and merits of her Sisters; but at the same time tells her also that she looks for crosses, as no work of the Good Shepherd was ever founded without them. And so it turned out, for hardly were the Sisters settled upon African soil, in a humble building in Mustapha, at the gate of Algiers, than death, sickness, poverty, and destitution visited them, thus sanctifying their infant work by trial.

CHAPTER VII

MOTHER PELLETIER'S SECOND JOURNEY TO ROME

1843

Her account of the journey—Her return—Visit to her convents—
Instructions to her daughters.

ANY tidings of sufferings undergone at the foundations that reached the Mother House, always afflicted Mother Pelletier's feeling heart. If powerless to offer other remedy, she never failed to send words of consolation, inspired by the spirit of faith and quickened by charity. A beautiful volume might be made out of her letters to her daughters in their afflictions. When it seemed probable that her presence would be helpful, she would go to them. Many were the journeys she thus undertook for their consolation and to strengthen her foundations.

At the close of 1843, we find her visiting the convent at Poitiers, on her way to Bourges, in which place she bought a house for penitents. Again the Convent of the Holy Cross at Rome was in distress. Every letter told of revolt among the prisoners, and of other hindrances to the work. The Mother-General consulted M. Regnier, and decided upon a second visit

to the Eternal City. It was nevertheless a season of trial for her and the Community at Angers. The very day she left, M. Mainguy, the Chaplain, her coadjutor in every good work since the Foundation, entered the Jesuit Novitiate at Laval, and his successor, M. Allory, had only been one week at the Good Shepherd. For foreign confessions Mgr. Angebault appointed the Abbé Maupoint to hear the English and Italian, M. Lamoureux for the German

But the Mother shrank from neither fatigue nor sacrifice, where the good of her houses was concerned. Starting, therefore, for Rome, with two of her daughters, she had the happiness of finding on board the vessel, in which she sailed, several priests and religious, and, thanks to the kindness of the captain, in lending his room, Mass was said every day. M. Eugène Boré was also on board the same vessel on his way to consult the Pope about his vocation. In a letter to one of his friends he says, "I found I had for companions four Jesuit fathers, bound for the Indian missions, and three other worthy ecclesiastics from the diocese of Besançon, also the Mother-General and two religious of the Good Shepherd at Angers, whose modesty inspired deep religious respect. We used all to meet on deck in the moonlight, which appeared to guide us, and interchange our hopes for the future triumphs of the faith."

Such circumstances as these could not have failed to impress a heart like Mother Pelletier's, always so accessible to the voice of God, whether in the grand

works of nature or the utterances of His servants. It was the very atmosphere of religious meditation, the stillness of night, the moon casting silvery gleams over the waves, the boundless sea and sky; the memories attached to that sea, which so many apostles, going forth to the conquest of the world, have crossed from north to south, from east to west, since first St. Peter and St. Paul traversed it, carrying the Gospel through the Roman Empire. Then the company assembled on the ship, the four Jesuit fathers going, as messengers of the same faith, to India; M. Boré travelling to St. Peter's tomb to seek light concerning his vocation; the Good Shepherd nuns themselves, carrying the Gospel of peace to poor sinners. Some of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's daughters had already crossed wider seas than this, and she regarded herself as one chosen also of God to spread the triumphs of the Church.

She gave particulars of the voyage in one of the discourses which followed her return to Angers.

"It gives me joy, my dear daughters, to make known to you that from the time we left the Mother House for Rome, we were favoured with the continual blessing of Divine Providence.

"At Mans, we stayed at the Monastery of the Visitation, where we received a most sisterly welcome. While we were enjoying ourselves very much at recreation with the Community, an aged Mother entered, and coming up to me uttered these words without any sort of preamble: 'My Mother, you

have done many things so far, but you are not yet half-way in your appointed career.' We gazed at her in silent amazement, and so did the religious.

"In our letter from Paris, my dear daughters, we told you of the graces showered on us there. Our meeting with the Pope's Nuncio we regard as a heavenly favour, for there can be no doubt it helped us much in Rome. We ought, however, to say that we were told, by mistake, that the Bishop of Nice was in Paris, and wrote to him requesting an audience. This was granted, and we set out to visit his Lordship, but when we reached the house we asked in vain for the Bishop of Nice: no one knew him, no one had seen him, no one had ever heard of him. But we were informed that the Bishop of *Nicæa*, the Papal Nuncio, lived in the college close by. We then perceived that one name had been mistaken for the other, but, keeping our discovery to ourselves, we asked to see the Nuncio, whom we found in expectation of our visit; the letter addressed to the Bishop of Nice had been delivered to him, and he had never suspected any mistake.

"He received us as daughters. We said nothing at all to him of our mishap, and talked of our Sisters in Rome and of some important matters in which he was interested. His Excellency was just on the point of leaving for the Holy City, where he arrived before us, and helped us with his powerful protection.

"A few days later, we were about to start for Rome; our places were taken in the *diligence*, but

just as we were getting into it, I felt so ill that I knew the journey was impossible for me.

"The good Superior from Paris took my place so far as Marseilles, and, hardly had the party started, than Mgr. de Forbin Janson (the former Bishop of Nancy) was announced. He had come to consult us about a very important mission, a foundation of the Good Shepherd in China, and to ask nothing less than the promise of five religious for the work. All the Paris Sisters are vying with one another in volunteering for it.

"We again set out for Rome. On the sea voyage we had the happiness of finding ourselves in holy company; four of our companions were Jesuit fathers travelling to India, and, perhaps, to martyrdom. The conversation with them was delightful, and, as we talked of winning souls to God, the ardour of our words seemed mutually to lead us on. You already know that M. Boré did not leave us until we reached Rome. Nothing can describe that young man's piety.

"When we disembarked at Civita Vecchia, the French and Austrian consuls came to meet us, and showed such kind care for us, and paid us so much attention, that we were quite confused. The Austrian consul, especially, rendered us every kind of service; and M. de Bussierre too, who sent us in his own carriage to Rome, that Rome which is the object of our every thought and desire.

"You would never be able to count all the graces

accorded to us in the Holy City. Oh! what precious audiences of His Holiness, Gregory XVI., have been vouchsafed to us! What abundant blessings we have obtained for our whole Congregation! And, oh! my dear daughters, how much he, the Head of the Church, loves our Congregation, and how dear you are to his heart!

“When I prayed in the principal Roman churches I thought of you all; I asked for you all, boundless zeal, tender charity towards the penitents—in one word, every virtue necessary for your holy vocation. And, above all, in the Basilica of St. Peter, I besought the chief pastor of the Church to protect you, to protect our whole Congregation.

“Nothing can give an idea of the pious emotion one feels on entering St. Peter’s in Rome. Oh, how privileged are those who live in that holy city, that ground watered by the blood of so many martyrs, the resting-place of so many sacred remains.

“And what shall I tell you of our houses in Rome, where I found such love of the Institute? Zeal for souls consumes our Sisters. The pious Princess Doria, who founded our house of the Lauretana, can refuse no request of the good Superior. We said, almost jokingly, to the latter that we were surprised to find her house so small. The joke went a little further, for we said the kitchens in the Doria Palace were much grander than the choir of the religious. Wounded in her honour by this thrust, she at once repeated what had been said to the Princess, and next day

there were workmen enlarging the Community choir and building dormitories.

“ We should like to tell you of all the graces God granted to us ; but this is not possible in one day. Our recreations, our conversations, our chapters will be a perpetual memorial of it all, for my mind and heart are plunged in the depths of this immensity of mercy. And you, my beloved daughters, remember all your life, that you are privileged children of God and of His Church, and that you should strive, with all your strength, to correspond with the designs of Divine Providence for our holy Congregation.

“ When we left Rome, we travelled with several members of the illustrious Doria family ; and on the ship with us were Prince Borghese, and dear little Princess Agnes, a delightful child.”

Mother Pelletier had re-established order and peace in the Prisoners' class at Holy Cross (the convent in which she stayed while in Rome). The very day after her arrival, Pope Gregory XVI. received her in audience, and this favour was repeated the day before she left Rome, when she was accompanied by the religious who had come with her. The Holy Father asked her many questions with kindly interest about her work and houses, their number and situation.

Cardinal Patrizi made her acquaintance, and praised the Lauretana house ; he gave her at the same time his own views with regard to the administration of the whole Order.

In addition to these occupations, Mother Pelletier

satisfied her devotion by visiting the churches, and her gratitude by thanking the Doria and Borghese families for their support of her Roman houses. While she was staying at Holy Cross she was visited by a great servant of God, Bernardo Maria Clausi, of the Order of Missions.

“When I went to Rome the second time,” she says in one of her instructions, “we had many difficulties. At Holy Cross there was a penitent who gave much trouble; she had been sent by Father Bernardo, whose reputation for sanctity was great in Rome. One day the Mistress, not knowing what more to do with this penitent, sent word to Father Bernardo that she would like to see him. He came to the monastery and said to her, ‘The penitent does not need me: it is your Mother-General who wants to speak to me. Our good God has just told me so.’ He said to me, speaking of the troubles of the Institute, ‘The devil, in circumstances of this sort, plays with the imagination of good people as if he were playing with a ball. The only thing to do is to keep silence and take refuge in God.’ Then he blessed me with the little statue of our Blessed Lady which he carried always in his hand.”

In the sanctified atmosphere of Rome, where so many Saints have lived and died, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia’s soul expanded; she felt at home, as if in God’s House. When talking to her daughters there of her emotions, her words were more than ever persuasive and eloquent.

“One evening,” says a Sister, “we were all gathered round her in the Community gardens, sitting under the orange trees which perfumed the sweet May evening. She was talking to us of charity, and her words were so penetrating that I felt as if it were the discourse after the Last Supper, our Lord’s parting words to His Apostles. We were so enraptured as we listened to her that the time slipped by unnoticed. It was in this conversation that our Mother said to us, ‘My children, God has given me two missions to fulfil, one for penitents, the other for religious vocations.’”

Having completed her task of re-establishing order at Holy Cross, Mother Pelletier had to face the pain of leaving her daughters, whose tender affection for her was ingeniously manifested in various ways. The Superior at the Lauretana gave her a robe of fine wool expressly made for her, a gift which the Mother received with great confusion, telling the Sisters they wanted to make her look like a fine lady of the world.

On the journey back to Angers she was everywhere received with marked respect. At Civita Vecchia she met a relation of Mme. d’Andigné, a naval officer, who was anxious that she should visit his ship, and did her all the honour in his power. Prince Borghese, who was also at Civita Vecchia, undertook to engage cabins for the Mother and the religious with her, on board the *Marie Antoinette*. She had a long conversation with a Russian lady travelling with two daughters, who was so much impressed that she conceived the idea of founding the Order in Russia.

The Mother always suffered much at sea, but at Leghorn, the voyage terminated. The rest of the journey was to be made by land, first to Turin, where Count Solaro de la Margherita expected them, to discuss means for a foundation in that city. The journey was made in the public conveyances, and was marked by many incidents. The country was mountainous, and more than once the coachman tried to extort exorbitant payment from the nuns by terrifying them. Utterly defenceless, in a foreign land, sometimes in the darkness of night, at the mercy of men greedy for gain and void of scruple, the religious often feared for their lives, and recommending herself and her companions to our Blessed Lady, Mother Pelletier promised to build a new chapel in her honour at the monastery at Angers, if they should escape the perils of the journey. One of the nuns succeeded in baffling the dangerous cupidity of a driver by telling him that the party, being expected at Court in Turin, there could be no doubt any molestation to which they were subjected would be inquired into by the King's ministers, and severely punished, thus effectually silencing his demands.

After a few days in Turin, Genoa was visited, and here Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia installed the Assistant of the house as Superior, having previously moved her predecessor in that office to be Superior at Holy Cross in Rome.

The Marquess and Marchioness of Pallavicini had established the Good Shepherd at Genoa in a

house far more like a palace than a convent, with its marbles and splendid apartments. In expectation of future additions by benefactors, a temporary chapel and provisional enclosure had been arranged. During the Mother's stay she was much sought after and kindly received by all whom she visited. She did not, of course, omit visiting St. Catherine's tomb, in the Hospital, to pray there. Genoa delighted her: the situation of the town, above the sea, with the fair horizon stretching far away, awoke in her that sympathy with God's work in nature to which she was so keenly susceptible.

At this convent there was a boarding-school for young girls, to which families of the better classes sent their children.

Mgr. Gualco, the Vicar-General, was especially pleased to make Mother Foundress' acquaintance; he had contributed to the establishment of the foundation more than any one else, and was now much interested in hearing the Mother's own account of her intentions for the house.

Many things in Genoa edified her: the spirit of concord among her daughters, their generosity, the great kindness of benefactors, and their care in executing her wishes; as, for instance, when she pointed out that the cloister grate was too handsome, and not in keeping with the rules of the Order, Mgr. Gualco at once ordered the workmen to carry out her wishes.

The good understanding prevailing among the several friends of the Genoese house made a gladsome

impression on the heart of the servant of God, which was an instalment of the reward of her self-sacrifice.

From Genoa the Mother went to Nice, where she stayed several days at the convent with her daughters. Her custom on arriving at one of her houses was to follow the Rule and to preside at the Community exercises. This was to her daughters, like a return to the sweet past of their Angers Novitiate, when the Mother presided at every exercise. She habitually lived in spirit in her dear Novitiate, not only talking of it to her daughters, but writing to it affectionate letters like the following:—

“FROM OUR MONASTERY AT NICE,
June 28th, 1843.

“ ‘Feed My lambs.’

“My dear, my beloved novices, how much I loved our Lord in St. Peter’s Church when He deigned to say to me, ‘Feed My lambs.’ Immediately my thoughts flew to our dear white lambs, then to the beloved postulants.

“It is so sweet to describe the docility, the fervour of our professed at Angers, and of all our other Communities, that my soul is filled with a great longing to behold in God a numerous and faithful flock. Could you but know, my dear daughters, how sweet it is to find the sheep docile who feed in the pastures of our Mother, Holy Church; could you but hear that Divine Mother’s longing sighs for the children of the Institute, which is her Institute; could you but hear

her calling you to every land; could you only comprehend the great designs she has for all and each of you, you would indeed strive after perfection with ever renewed earnestness, for the precious days of the Novitiate never return. At every foundation I visit, I hear of regrets and yearnings for the past. Our missions are so large, so extraordinary, that your former companions have no time to breathe except to speak of Angers, for their attachment is more vast than the ocean.

“Once, in the gardens at Rome, we forgot the evening obedience while talking of our *Mother House*. We were sitting on the borders of a stream beneath orange trees, and our daughters said, ‘Ah, dear Mother, tell us more about Angers!’

“Nor do our houses in Piedmont fall short of Rome in this respect. I thought that our Sisters at Nice would have died of joy: *God, Heaven, Angers, are their only memories*. And they are indeed blessed! Their classes are going on admirably; their holy Bishop is building and buying on all sides. I bring his plans away in my head to explain them to our much loved Sister Teresa of Jesus. As for Genoa, Sister St. Raphael has written all about it. She is the personification of gratitude. There is no difficulty in carrying such plans and such remembrances to Angers.

“When once more in that Holy Ark, how often shall we repeat, ‘Oh, how beautiful is our Institute!’ No letters can ever give an idea of the progress of our Congregation.

“ Dear Novitiate, give glory to God, for you are indeed fortunate in being called to this holy vocation.

“ We can give you no idea, my beloved daughters, of the immense good the royal foundation is producing in Turin; every town in Piedmont is hearing of it. The pious Marquess de la Margherita has written of it to Nice, too, to the great delight of the holy Bishop there. But it is quite certain that all this will bring us many invitations—houses and gardens are being offered already. Alas! subjects are wanting. But it rejoices me to see our numerous colony of postulants. Have the two from Poitiers come? How glad I shall be to see them; but as yet I dare not begin to count the days. Tell our good Mother-Assistant, and our professed Sisters, that they are to pray to our Blessed Lady to shorten the time of my exile. They will not find me ungrateful for the obligation; they will assuredly be rewarded. If you do not belong to St. Ignatius, you, nevertheless, are to make yourselves happy on his festival; but for that one day only, my little children, for it seems to me that we take a somewhat unfair advantage of our Sisters’ kindness; there have been great holidays enough.

“ We send you a little white flower we gathered on the grave of Sister Mary of St. Florence. You know love is stronger than death. I had a wish to see those dear ones again. One of the graves was opened, but it contained nothing but a few bones, which we sprinkled with our tears, and then, having prayed, we came silently away. To-morrow we are to leave for

Toulon, where we hope to receive news of our dear Mother House; it is such a long time since we had any. It is not the fault of Angers; it is our fault for being late, through having lost ourselves on the mountains. I feel great consolation in returning to France. Very important events have taken place at Nice since we began this letter. Tell our dear Sisters Assistant that we shall write to them from Toulon.

“Adieu, my dear little lambs! With affection I am, in the Heart of the Divine Shepherd, your deeply attached Mother,
MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA.”

Mother Pelletier's journey to Rome had given fresh impulse to her zeal, for she had seen what hopes were founded there upon the Institute for the salvation of souls. The Cardinal Vicar visited Holy Cross almost daily to speak words of consolation and encouragement to her. He would say to her over and over again, “Depend upon my devotedness, Mother. I can have no greater pleasure than to give you proofs of it.” At Turin her reception by His Majesty Charles Albert, and by his pious minister, M. de la Marguerita, gave her great confidence with regard to her foundations in the Piedmontese kingdom. She went back to France full of consolation. Rome had blessed her; her daughters were keeping the unity of spirit she had taught them; pious and benevolent souls approved and praised her work, and generously aided it.

From Nice she went to her house at Toulon, where the confessor, M. Marni, a pious priest, who was also

senior chaplain to the navy and bagne,¹ was anxiously awaiting her arrival. He wanted to enlarge the monastery. His conversation, his modest, mortified exterior, the knowledge that he lived in great self-deprivation, to be able to give more to the poor, and was constantly forming plans for the good of others, greatly moved the Mother. She went with him to visit the plot of ground he wished to buy for the Good Shepherd. They imparted to each other their views with regard to charity and their common apostolate, and thus seed was sown which was to grow into a great harvest. The Mother always looked upon this meeting as a providential grace. Her soul, constantly filled with ardour for God's glory, was fired with fresh flames of charity, and five and twenty years later her daughters at Toulon still remembered the persuasive eloquence of their Mother in the spiritual conversations she held with them, seated on the mossy sward of the enclosure. They remembered how touchingly she had prophesied that a great multitude of sheep would seek the shelter of their fold.

Strength of soul increases a hundredfold by contact with other souls of like desires and devotedness. We often find Mother Pelletier thus meeting by the way other servants of God, filled with her own zeal for the conversion of souls, and for these favours she was ever most grateful to God.

Gratitude is the virtue of the perfect; the Gospel constantly shows us our Divine Lord giving thanks

¹ The bagne, or galleys, are what we call the hulks—penal servitude.

to the Father. The perfect Christian, seeing his own nothingness, instinctively thanks Him who has deigned to behold his lowliness, and to bestow on him benefits of soul and body ; and Mother Pelletier, besides living in this habitual state of gratitude to God, had a natural impulse to show her sense of obligation to those who patronised her works and supported them.

On her way from Nice, she stayed at the Convent of the Plain, and here was visited by the pious Bishop of Grenoble, Mgr. Bruillard, in spite of his great age ; a generous prelate who had given 50,000 francs for the purchase of the convent, and had, in addition, undertaken to keep it in a state of proper repair. His kindness made such a deep impression on her that she burst into tears in his presence ; whilst he was so moved by her recognition of it that he repeatedly said to the Sisters, "The Mother General's gratitude goes far beyond anything I have been able to do."

Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's presence in her convents was the fruitful source of manifold blessings to them ; her persuasive words revived zeal, drew together hearts in the bond of charity, made benefactors accessible to generous feelings, and thus led to improvements in the buildings, and to new plans for their enlargement. At Chambéry, which she visited after Grenoble, her visit was marked, as at Toulon, by the acquisition of a new house with a walled enclosure. The Bishop of Chambéry listened attentively to her account of the proposed foundation in Turin, and of

the King's interest in the Good Shepherd, and became increasingly anxious that the Institute should make progress.

Lyons, Mâcon, Bourg were all visited by the servant of God, and, wherever she went, her presence brought happiness, renewal of zeal, and also some little increase of well-being. At Bourg, for instance, moved by the very great poverty of her daughters, and their attachment to their work in spite of every difficulty, she took measures to improve the accommodation of the six Magdalens who were lodged in very cramped quarters.

When she reached Poitiers she found several religious from Angers awaiting her arrival; they had come expressly to meet her, bearers of the good wishes of all the Community, anxious to show their own joy at her return.

She was welcomed at Angers itself with boundless enthusiasm after her long absence in Italy and her visits to fourteen houses of the Order. Forty postulants were awaiting her return to take the habit, twelve novices to pronounce their vows. Her own personal zeal for the Institute had been stirred by her late experiences in various monasteries of the Order, and it was the fulness of her own heart that she yearned to pour out to her expectant daughters. Never had her addresses been so ardent, and her incessant theme was the foundations and her visits to them. The following instruction was the first she gave after her return:—

“Wherever I went I reminded our beloved Sisters of these words spoken by our Ven. Father Eudes: ‘They should employ mind, heart, and diligence in making themselves the worthy co-adjutrices and co-operatrices of Jesus Christ our Lord, in His work of saving the souls purchased by His Blood.’

“These are words, my dear daughters, of which we strive to realise the deep significance, in order to put them in practice.

“Never shall I know how to thank God enough for allowing me, by His grace, to visit our houses in the South. And now I am praying to Him to grant me the favour to visit those of the North, when winter is over. And when I come back, should it be His will, I shall be ready to sing my *Nunc Dimittis*.

“I found in every monastery the most perfect docility. We did, indeed, find several matters requiring reformation, but, where there was any fault, it was through inexperience. Some said to me, ‘We were sent out so young! but we are ready to do whatever you wish, whatever you tell us;’ and every necessary reform was made.

“Religious perfection does not consist in having no defects, in committing no faults. It consists in the correction of ourselves when told of our failings.

“There is one thing to be guarded against: we should avoid prejudices, feelings of repugnance towards certain monasteries or countries.

“Wherever you are, try always to preserve as much

as possible the customs and practices of the Mother House. But, at the same time, have discernment, and be persuaded that the guidance of circumstances must sometimes be accepted, doing the best one can, and remembering that, according to the spirit of our vocation, we ought to be *all things to all men*. Let me give you an instance which will point out to you the necessity of conforming to this advice. In one of our houses in Rome they had kept French food and some other customs not usual in Italy; the penitents there never got used to these things, and were very hard to convert. In the other house I found the food of the country, and there the penitents were content and affectionate towards the Mothers, who, by these simple measures, found it much easier to bring souls to God.

“But your rule should be, above all things, your guide, your star; and as for our customs here, let it be your sweetest happiness to preserve them so far as you can.

“We wish all our monasteries to have a seal for letters like the one we use here. I should also like the refectories to be similar, and that, so far as possible, the dishes should be pewter. One of our good Mothers said, ‘Silver dishes are for great noblemen, pewter ones for religious; as for modern dinner sets let us leave them to the world.’ However, St. Augustine allows the spoons to be silver for the sake of greater cleanliness.

“We shall do more than we have done hitherto, to comfort and encourage our Sisters at the foundations;

they are so good ! Be very, very careful that no word be said which might in the least give them pain ; and, should anything of this kind unfortunately occur, I protest before you all that that letter was not seen by me. The Mother House could never do too much to please our good Sisters. We shall always send for their support Sisters to help them on whose zeal we can rely, good Mistresses of Penitents, for nothing is of more importance in houses of the Good Shepherd.

“Listen to what I say, my dear daughters. When a house has first a good Superior, next a devoted Assistant who helps her in every way, then a true Mistress of Penitents, with one under her who thoroughly understands work, that house will go on well. And, to become useful to the monastery where you may be sent, you ought each to grow perfect in your allotted task. For instance, the Sister who has not much head for study, ought to give her whole mind to her sewing, mending, or ironing; learn, too, how to prepare and direct work. Keep your charge in perfect order, be it what it may. Our Lord has much good work for each of you to do; thank Him for it, rejoice in it, and always have great courage.

“This morning, whilst I was praying, I thought of St. Vincent de Paul presenting a poor little forsaken child to the ladies, who were to have helped him in his work and who were discouraged. ‘Now, then, ladies!’ he said to them, ‘will you leave this poor baby to die? Will you leave the poor little creature without baptism, without succour of any kind?’

“ And all the ladies, with reanimated zeal, promised to support the work, even at the cost of life.

“ To you, my dear daughters, I present our thirty houses : they can only exist by your devotedness, zeal, and self-sacrifice. See, then, what there is for you to do. I am not afraid of our houses lacking temporal resources, and I am certain that God protects them ; but I cannot hope for their continuance unless our religious are truly devoted, unless they have the spirit and the love of the Cross.

“ Remember, my dear daughters, that we were founded upon Mount Calvary.

“ If those ladies of Paris to whom St. Vincent of Paul spoke had had the works you have to do, what would they have said, what would they have done ? Try, therefore, to imagine the immense good you are called to do ; it will always be wider than you can grasp.

“ What consolation, when we close the eyes of our poor penitents, to be able to think that those eyes will only open again to gaze on the ineffable beauties of heaven ! They leave the life of this world with very great resignation, their deaths are very edifying ; and you, my dear daughters, who have the merit of assisting in their salvation, you will be rewarded in the never-ending day of eternity.”

CHAPTER VIII

MOTHER MARY ST. EUPHRASIA'S STRUGGLES TO MAINTAIN THE RIGHTS OF HER COMMUNITY

1842-1843

Mother Pelletier and her ecclesiastical superiors—Mgr. Angebault
—His conduct towards Mother Pelletier and the Constitutions
of the Institute.

WHEN one considers the great works Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia founded, the development of her first poor convent into the 110 houses scattered over the world and sheltering multitudes of religious and children; when, step by step, one traces her devoted life, and sees her constantly encouraging others and seeking out the wretched to console them; when one reads of her travels in France and Italy to visit her houses, it seems scarcely possible that one woman should have been able to accomplish all, one mind conceive and shape such vast plans, that human weakness should have had strength to carry them into execution.

It may, of course, be said that she was raised by God for her work; that her foundations are the seal of her sanctity; that, should the Church hereafter raise her to her altars, she will be canonised in virtue of what she achieved.

But side by side with this life of activity, an activity remarkable even to the most careless superficial glance, is another, less apparent, but more meritorious her life in the silence of the cloister, where, unseen save by God, she suffered and bore her cross, following in the footprints of her Divine Master, and daily sanctifying her soul by painful struggles that ceased only with life.

Naturally of a trustful, open-hearted disposition, she rejoiced in the approbation of those set over her by God as His representatives, and, during the earlier years of her foundations, she enjoyed much of this pure happiness, for both Mgr. Montault and Mgr. de Hercé and all her ecclesiastical Superiors supported her with their encouragement and protected her houses with their devoted affection. The approval of a Bishop was in her eyes the guarantee for success in establishing a foundation; but from 1842, till the close of her life, she had to endure the severe trial of seeing her intentions misunderstood by her Bishop, and had often had to meet his opposition to some most important Constitutions. This prolonged conflict was the crucible in which her soul was to be more and more purified, and clothed in the shining robes of sanctity. To suffer at the hands of our enemies, hard as it is, is only the common lot of humanity; but to suffer at the hands of those who ought to be our protectors, and yet be powerless to make them understand us, is a martyrdom which in the long run becomes intolerable to a soul not strongly rooted in virtue.

It will be remembered that at the time the office of

Superior-General was created, Mother Pelletier, in submitting her plan of organisation to the Holy See, had expressed a wish that the Bishop of Angers should be declared Superior of the Good Shepherd. The Rev. Father Kohlman, S.J., however, Consultor of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars and reporter of the petition, gave her the following advice in a letter, dated January 26th, 1835:—"You desire that the Bishop of Angers should be declared your Superior-General: (1) Too much stress cannot be laid upon the possible results of two Superiors-General, whether equal or unequal, in a religious Order; (2) Your present venerable Bishop (Mgr. Montault) is in perfect harmony with you, but will this be the case with all his successors? and imagine the torture of the Superior-General of an Order forced into litigation with an Episcopal Superior-General. The Superior-General, assisted by her sisters of the Council, should have perfect freedom in the government of the Order and the disposal of subjects. Believe what I tell you: for religious Orders which look to future extension, the Sovereign Pontiff himself is the best Superior-General: such orders prosper best under the jurisdiction and immediate protection of the Holy See. The Religious of the Sacred Heart placed themselves under the immediate jurisdiction of the Holy See, and have reason to congratulate themselves upon having done so.

"ANTONY KOHLMAN, S.J."

As, in point of fact, the Holy See never gave any

Bishop or other Priest the title and authority of Superior-General, Father Kohlman's advice prevailed. In a brief, dated April 3rd, 1835, Gregory XVI. had approved in its entirety, and confirmed anew, the decree of the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars of the ninth and sixteenth days of the preceding January, defining the powers of the Superior-General of the Good Shepherd, after which, by Apostolic note, he appointed Cardinal Odescalchi to be Cardinal Protector with perfectly defined authority; and this note, whilst leaving to every Bishop his ordinary jurisdiction as local Superior in his diocese, made it impossible for any individual prelate to imagine himself to be Superior-General of the Order.

The Constitutions, which were printed at Rome under the special supervision of the Holy See, by their thirty-second article established that the Congregation should be always under the *protection, correction, and government* of a Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church, who was to be the Director of the Superior-General as to all good works undertaken: corrector in faults against religious discipline, counsellor in every weighty matter, supreme judge in all difficulties; he was also to have the right of visiting and presiding in person wherever he might be. The Mother-General was to make no new foundation without his consent. All these prerogatives had been delegated by the Cardinal Protector to M. Regnier, between whom and the Mother-General untroubled harmony had always reigned, to the advantage of the whole Order.

Mgr. Angebault, previously to his designation to the see of Angers, had heard all the accusations brought against Mother Pelletier by the refuge at Nantes, where he had been Vicar-General of the diocese, and Superior of the Sisters of St. Gildas. He acknowledged, twenty-six years later, that he came to Angers strongly prejudiced against Mother Pelletier, and with the fixed determination of reducing her to obedience to the Rule of the Refuge.

In 1842 M. Regnier was made Bishop of Angoulême, and Cardinal Patrizi (the then newly appointed Protector of the Good Shepherd) wrote to Mgr. Angebault, offering to confer on him the powers vacated by M. Regnier, that is, the prerogatives of supreme superintendence and direction in the Cardinal Protector's name, as laid down in the 32nd Constitution.

Mgr. Angebault first supposed that the Cardinal was Protector only of the Roman houses, and that he was now invited to succeed M. Regnier in that office. Feeling probably, however, that a proposal investing a Bishop of Angers with such powers in the Pope's own diocese, required explanation, he wrote, on the 7th August 1842 (three days before his consecration), saying he wished, before coming to any decision, to obtain some information from Mother Pelletier.

Like the majority of his contemporary ecclesiastics, he had been reared in notions of Canon law widely differing from those now prevalent. The usages to which he had been accustomed in most French Com-

munities made no distinction between ecclesiastical jurisdiction and the domestic and maternal power of internal government, and gave the Bishop of the Mother House powers of absolute jurisdiction over all the houses of the Order, even those situated in other dioceses; and he seemed incapable of understanding that, in matters affecting the internal administration of her Communities or obediences to her religious, Mother Pelletier's authority was not subordinate to his; he was, moreover, unable to admit or recognise the rights and office of the Cardinal Protector.

Hence the painful contest which became Mother Pelletier's daily, hourly cross—a cross borne in silence—few even of the Community suspecting the sorrow which overwhelmed her soul with every fresh episode of the conflict, in which she persisted only for the good of the Institute and to maintain it in its integrity. To her, more even than to others, must such a strife have been painful, for her natural inclination was to respect authority, and she was, moreover, very sensitive. In Mgr. Angebault's predecessor (Mgr. Montault) and the Bishop of Nantes (Mgr. de Hercé) she had been accustomed to unfailing support and encouragement, and it was her desire to win, if not the favour of her diocesan, at least his good will, by ready obedience to him in all matters not contrary to the Statutes of her Order, or to the rights inalienable from her office as Mother-General. She, however, never altogether succeeded, and, even at the close of her life, her joy in the providential extension of her work

was clouded by the grief caused by her Bishop's unrelenting coldness and his occasional reproaches.

He was a prelate in whom great piety and zeal were allied to no ordinary talents for organisation and administration, and he had specially at heart the government of the religious Communities, which were very numerous in his diocese. With the Superior of each he would enter into the most minute details relating to the management and good order of their houses; and scarcely did a particle of dust that dimmed the lustre of cleanliness, or the least act of disobedience that marred the perfection of discipline escape his vigilance. Under this *régime* Communities grew and flourished into new life. His manner was gracious and affable; there was perhaps something feminine in his susceptibility, but he had developed a happy natural gift for doing the right thing pleasantly, gaining his point by extreme gentleness, a method more commonly to be found in women than in men, and for that reason very suitable in dealing with Communities of religious women, in all spiritual intercourse with whom he was peculiarly successful. His eminent success in handling other Congregations (among which may be mentioned La Retraite, St. Charles la Forêt, St. Gildas, Torfou) only made him the more anxious to direct the Good Shepherd on similar lines, and the more sensitive to Mother Pelletier's legitimate resistance. Fresh successes with other Communities always stimulated him into putting new pressure upon the Good Shepherd, to the proportionate torture of the Mother-General's heart.

But there can be no doubt of his good faith in considering himself Superior-General of the Order, from the fact of the Mother House being situated in his diocese; and, starting from this mistaken principle, he claimed a right to exercise (and to delegate others to exercise in his name) powers, not of mere ecclesiastical jurisdiction, but those of domestic government, which Rome leaves to the Mother-General and her Sisters of the Council. He believed, moreover, in perfectly good faith that his inherent authority as Superior-General was independent of any decision of Roman Congregations. Of a highly imaginative and sensitive temperament he found it hard to brook the resistance with which all attempts to exercise the rights he thought legitimately his, were met, but which in point of fact were opposed to Canon law and the decisions of the Roman Courts. Influenced by his emotions, he imagined his authority was disputed on no better grounds than caprice and the love of independence, and, allowing his prejudices to gain the upper hand, he suspected intentional personal slights where the question was simply one of legal right.

From time to time during his Episcopate the struggle was renewed with more or less vehemence. The whole Community was attacked, but especially the Superior, who, yearning for peace, suffered indescribably in being powerless to win her diocesan's approval for herself and her Institute. It was her nature to love to please others, and she rendered ready obedience to him in every point involving no breach

of the Constitutions or the decisions of Rome. She yielded to his wishes, to his suggestions even, except when they clashed with some essential point in the Constitution; she had recourse to him for every permission, not only those otherwise unobtainable, but those for which the demand was dictated only by her own sense of propriety. She let no occasion of marking her submission to him and his representatives escape her, but all her efforts seemed to irritate rather than pacify him, and only drew from him such terms as "double-dealing" and "trickery."

When presents came from her houses in America or the East, it was her delight to send them as an offering to the Bishop's Palace. If the Bishop or some representative of his visited the Good Shepherd they were welcomed with tokens of joy; the house was decorated with flowers and garlands to receive them; some poetical spirit in it was charged with the task of preparing verses suitable to the occasion; distinguished priests of the Mother's acquaintance were invited to attend. But, notwithstanding all this, Mgr. Angebault never fully trusted Mother Pelletier, nor did she ever altogether succeed in eradicating either his prejudices or his exaggerated notions of his jurisdiction over the whole Institute; notions, it must be confessed, which were shared by many among those of his episcopal brethren whom he consulted, a circumstance which strengthened his own opinions.

In September 1842, a month after his consecration, he began to act as Superior-General of the Good

Shepherd. He forbade Mother Pelletier to go to Rome, where her presence was required by her religious, especially by the Superior of the Monastery of the Holy Cross, who would have benefited greatly by her maternal advice. He also initiated direct relations with different houses of the Institute, and among others with Grenoble, writing there to promise that he would send the Mother-General to the south of France.

Such steps as these made it incumbent upon Mother Pelletier to show that she had scruples about permitting the new Bishop to assume a jurisdiction which, according to the Constitution, belonged exclusively to the Cardinal Protector. On his side, Mgr. Angebault, having consulted the Constitutions, expressed astonishment with regard to the 32nd, which treats of the office of the Cardinal Protector, and the 33rd, regarding the ordinary confessor; but, instead of addressing his remonstrances to the Holy See, he began discussions upon Canon law with Mother Pelletier. He sent her a note in which he remarked that the 32nd Constitution made it appear doubtful whether Bishops had full and entire jurisdiction over monasteries of the Good Shepherd, and seemed rather to suppose that they are but Superiors delegated by the Cardinal Protector, to whose approval their authority was to be subject. He added that, with regard to the 33rd Constitution, upon the selection of the confessor, it was both dangerous to the Community and inadmissible by their Bishop.

Mother Pelletier forwarded this note to Rome, and

on the 12th December 1842, Cardinal Patrizi wrote her the following answer: "The first article of Constitution 32 seems sufficiently clear to have banished from the Bishop's mind any doubts he might have had as to the authority he may, or ought, to exercise over the monasteries of the Congregation of the Good Shepherd, which are, or shall hereafter be, founded in his diocese; for, since in that article, it is written that the Congregation shall remain under the ordinary jurisdiction of the diocesan Bishop, according to the Tridentine Decrees and the Apostolic Constitutions, how can he, in presence of declarations so precise and positive, doubt the full and entire jurisdiction of Bishops over the monasteries of the Good Shepherd, or others in their dioceses?" The Cardinal then mentions that Mgr. Angebault's predecessor had never complained of any hindrances in the full exercise of his jurisdiction over the monastery, and explains to him that, in the interests of the unity of the Institute, the Holy See had deemed it necessary to establish some central authority, upon which should be laid the burden of decision in all more important questions affecting the whole body of the Congregation; and that, in order to avoid exciting the jealousy of particular Bishops (who might each have laid claims to equal rights), it had been necessary to appoint a Cardinal Protector to be the Superior-General, who, from his position, had facilities for the preservation of unity without detriment to the ordinary jurisdiction of any local Superiors, such as none other could possibly

possess. Then he disavows any personal hankering after authority, and alludes to his letter of the 25th July, in which, by requesting Mgr. Angebault to act as his representative in all matters belonging to the higher grades of his office, he claims to have given indubitable proof of his boundless confidence in him, and to have removed all grounds for suspicion.

He concludes by saying that, if the Bishop still disapproves of the two Constitutions, he will promise to do all in his power to satisfy him, provided he will send a clear statement of his proposals, and consent to leave the two disputed clauses substantially intact.

It should here be mentioned that Article 1 of Constitution 32 is taken, word for word, from the Constitutions of the Refuge.

In speaking of full and entire ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the monasteries, Cardinal Patrizi speaks as a Roman canonist, and reserves to the Superior the domestic, economic, maternal legislation of the household, which is her religious family. His language, however, was unintelligible at that time to many French Bishops and Priests, who recognised only one authority, that of the ecclesiastical Superior, in which that of the Mother Superior was absorbed. Forty years ago French Bishops were too often prone to interfere in the domestic government and administration of convents, although the Church, in her wisdom, had promulgated laws which secured to female Communities the right of self-government in the details of

life affected by difference of sex and other circumstances altogether foreign to masculine interference.

The Cardinal Protector's letter did not satisfy the Bishop. The conditions which, seven years earlier, Mgr. Montault had sought to establish, which Mgr. Paysant had accepted without complaint, conditions approved by Rome in the Constitutions, Mgr. Angebault thought should be abrogated. On January 10th, 1843, he addressed a lengthy *supplica* to Gregory XVI., stating that, to secure the future stability of the daily developing and flourishing Institute of the Daughters of our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, it was now necessary that its members should be no longer subject to the observance of their thirty-second and thirty-third constitutions; and being himself thoroughly convinced that the proposed changes were requisite for the well-being of the Community, he invited the Superior and the Sisters of the Council to give the petition their adhesion, and to unite with him in asking for this change; this they, however, refused.

Mother Pelletier's resistance was passive. She merely said that she left the matter to God and to the Holy See. But meanwhile the Sisters of the Council took energetic measures in Rome to keep their Constitutions intact. Of these proceedings Mgr. Angebault was at a later stage informed through the treachery of a deserter, and deemed himself justly offended by what he considered an insult to his authority, although in point of fact it was only natural that

the Sisters should have had recourse to the Pope. Rome had given them their rule, the rule they had hitherto lived under, and in which they desired to persevere till death.

Mgr. Angebault, discovering meantime that many of the Bishops he consulted held his own views, seized upon the office of Superior-General without even waiting for the answer from Rome. His letters to the Community in 1843 contain advice, direction, and remarks about houses outside his own diocese. He wished to govern the Institute precisely as he did diocesan Congregations, to remodel the relations between the foundations and the Mother House upon the plan of those Communities, and to concentrate all the revenues and resources in the convent of Angers. The situation of the Monastery of the Holy Cross in Rome was becoming increasingly critical, and in the spring of the year he sent Mother St. Euphrasia thither, who, profiting by this opportunity, was able to give Cardinal Patrizi an account of the dangers with which the Bishop's claims and projects threatened the Institute.

When a man like Mgr. Angebault, though pious and bent upon doing good, becomes filled with an exaggerated notion of his rights, takes up mistaken views as to the path to be followed for the welfare of a Community, his very sincerity and earnestness become an infliction upon those with whom he deals.

From his point of view, Cardinal Patrizi appeared only as an ordinary patron, a benevolent friend of the Institute, giving a colour to the action of the Bishop

and Superior, but not himself the ecclesiastical Superior of the Order. He blamed the acts of the Cardinal Protector to Mother Pelletier, and tried to win her over to the like view. On the 3rd of September he wrote: "It was with pain that I saw, on your return from Rome, the direction given to your beloved Congregation. I perceive the futility of the protection we looked for at the hands of his Eminence the Cardinal Protector. Two very important matters summoned you to Rome. The first, the repeal, to wit, of Constitutions, 32 and 33, is committed to consultants. When will it be finished? The Cardinal, though friendly to us, has not given you the least practical hint."

Mother Pelletier had probably been advised by the Cardinal Protector as to her course of conduct in the matter; but Mgr. Angebault, being the declared adversary of the disputed Constitutions, she naturally could not take him into her confidence.

In the same letter Mgr. Angebault complained bitterly of the manner in which the Superior of the Holy Cross had left the Order. She had done so *contrary to the wishes of her Superiors*, and although he acknowledged that she had received her dispensation from the Holy See, he went on to animadvert on her having left without "so much as giving notice of her intention to the Bishop, to whom she had vowed obedience." As if a Bishop of Angers could retain the right of jurisdiction over a religious in a convent in Rome, the Pope's own diocese! He then went on

to say that things could not continue on such a footing: "There is no more unity, no direction, no subordination. Your authority is disregarded, mine treated with contempt."

On the 22nd September he wrote to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, expressing his sorrow in seeing "of how little use their combined efforts had been at Rome."

Nothing could have given greater pain to Mother Pelletier than these insinuations against the Cardinal Protector and the Roman Congregation. She loved Rome with a pious devotion, which made her specially sensitive to such complaints. As will be remembered, she had laboured strenuously to obtain the Pope's approbation for her Constitutions, and had exulted with holy joy in the apostolicity the immediate protection of Rome conferred on her Institute. Respect for her Bishop now kept her silent; but it may be imagined with what terror she foresaw the disastrous results with which the storm threatened her Congregation. For that which she had built up at the cost of so much toil, and which till now had been the very bulwark of her Order, and marked it as distinct from the isolated houses of the Refuge, was being undermined. She trembled at the hot haste which could not wait for the Pope's answer to the *supplica* addressed to him, January 10th, 1843, for the setting aside of the Constitutions, and the reinstatement of the Bishops in the authority of Protector.

In his letter of the 3rd September to Mother Pelletier

the Bishop says: "I have asked for exact information about the local houses; I shall require it if I have to give advice about them."

The Bishop of Angers had meantime, at Rome, a fellow-countryman in close touch with the several sacred Congregations, a person thoroughly devoted to him, who acted in his behalf for the vindication of his fancied prerogatives and the speedy abrogation of Constitutions 32 and 33. In his zeal, which outran discretion, to the injury of his principal's contention, this man advised the prelate to drive the Sisters themselves into suing for the abrogation of the Constitutions, and the suppression of the Cardinal Protector. He further told him how this could be done, to wit, by throwing up the functions of local Superior, until he was appointed Superior-General. Now, what would become of a Community whose diocesan kept aloof from the canonical examen of postulants and novices, and from the yearly visitation? who would give no dispensation nor faculties to chaplains and preachers? This would necessarily cause its ruin.

There was another point which caused Mother Pelletier intense pain and anxiety. In his wish to act prudently and to obtain light in his perplexity the Bishop of Angers communicated with the several prelates in whose dioceses the Good Shepherd had a footing. As might be expected he would plausibly state his personal views and grounds of complaint. Hence arose the danger that the several Communities might be separated from the Central House.

We find an echo of all her sorrows in the following letter to Mme. de Couëspel, Superior at Munich, dated 25th February 1845 :—

“We knew you would not be insensible to the persecutions we are undergoing, and that you would fully appreciate the importance of the points at stake. Fear nothing ; by the grace of God, who is our Helper, not a single point will be yielded. This must be known, and it is probably one of the reasons why we have been subjected to the incessant vexations wherewith we are visited.

“But we suffer these vexations without wearying, and will never allow so much as a jot or tittle to be altered in our Rules and Constitutions, or holy customs. When it was seen that nothing would sunder our unity, letters were written to several Bishops in whose dioceses we have foundations. Some of these Bishops are now corresponding directly with Angers, one especially, and truly we have been betrayed by him and by our Sisters. That monastery is the only one that gives the like trouble ; but the Bishop will have it that there are many others like-minded, and it is in order to maintain union that he wishes to set a Superior over us. We cannot prevent his placing over us a clergyman, to whom he delegates his own powers, but his jurisdiction cannot extend beyond his own diocese. He has no right to foist upon us a Superior-General. Rome alone has power to appoint one who should represent the Cardinal-Protector, and be his agent. It would be dangerous at present to write to his Lordship

the Bishop, to protest against the injury he is doing the Congregation, in representing all its members as participators in the spirit of rebellion and insubordination, which is in reality confined to one place and to a few individuals. The spirit of pride led those individuals astray, and they are led by the same spirit still; but, with a little patience they will come right. If one were to make any protest now against their conduct, Monseigneur would be sure to publish his reasons, and our Sisters would be disgraced."

It was indeed putting Mother Pelletier's heart to a bitter trial, first to try and detach her foundations from her, and then to make use of the insubordination thus provoked to prove that all the local houses would drift away from their obedience to the Mother House unless a Superior-General were appointed at Angers. Nor could she so much as protest against the attempts to disseminate the spirit of insubordination, because in so doing she must have published the names of those few Sisters who had been seduced from their allegiance and failed in their fidelity. Charity forbade her to protest, and she chose rather to suffer in silence than expose the weakness and ingratitude of those rare exceptions among her daughters; but, with her sensitive nature, her inclination to give pleasure to all, it was hard for her to bear the ever-present sense of her Bishop's opposition to her mode of governing her Community.

This painful conflict, bravely sustained, recalls others equally arduous, of which the founders of certain re-

ligious Orders had to bear the brunt, at the beginning of this century, with French Bishops, still imbued with Gallican theories. It brings back the memory of much more ancient contests waged with unfettered liberty of spirit, and with prudent tact, by one of our most eminent national Saints. In his "History of St. Louis," Joinville records that this saintly king was at one time in conflict with the prelates of France, whose pretensions he withstood, as void of right, and that he appealed from them to the Roman Pontiff.

"Another time," writes Joinville, "I met the King at Paris, when all the French Bishops had asked him for an audience. The King went to meet them at the Palace. Guy, Bishop of Auxerre, the son of Mgr. William de Melle, spoke to the King as follows: "Sire, the lords now present, archbishops and bishops, desire me to warn you that Christendom is going to ruin at your hands."

St. Louis made the sign of the Cross, and asked, "Tell me how that can be?"

"Sire," replied the Bishop, "people nowadays care so little for excommunication that they die under the censure, and refuse to make satisfaction to the Church. The Bishops therefore demand of you, in the name of God and of your bounden duty, that you would order your provosts and bailies to levy a distress on all who have remained under excommunication a year and a day, to compel them to seek absolution."

The King replied that he was willing to issue this

order in the case of those whose guilt was proved to his satisfaction. The prelate said that the Church would never allow him to take cognisance of such cases, which were her exclusive province.

The King declared that he would abide by his word, as it would be a sin and an injustice if he compelled people to seek to be absolved by the clergy when it was the clergy who were in the wrong. And, added the King, "I will give you an instance. The Count of Brittany, for all that he was excommunicate, pleaded for seven years against the Bishops of Brittany, and with such success that the Pope condemned them one and all."

The Pope did not condemn the Bishop of Angers, but he acknowledged and proclaimed the rights of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia.

After a lapse of fifty years we can hardly pass an equitable judgment on the acts of a pious prelate like Mgr. Angebault. Ecclesiastical jurisprudence in France, as regarded religious Communities, with houses in every part of the world, had not at that time been defined with the precision which, it has since gradually attained. It was then a novelty in the Church that cloistered nuns, dedicated to works of charity, should have a Superior-General like the Jesuits or Dominicans, and for Communities of the kind a detailed and particular application of the general principles, laid down by the Council of Trent, was required.

Further, how could it be expected that the Bishops of France should, at the very outset, have been pre-

pared to alter their own methods of governing the Communities of their respective dioceses? Instead of cavilling, we should rather admire them for the zeal with which, just after the Revolution, they set to the work of reopening convents for the education of the young and the care of the sick.

One very important fact may be gathered from this painful controversy between Mother Pelletier and her Bishop. Rome is visible through it all as the centre of wisdom, the source of the Church's fecundity, the giver of rules, the fountain of zealous inspiration to her great servants. From the Pope had Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia received the Constitutions of her Institute, and, together with those Constitutions, that sacred liberty which imparted to her Order a life and expansion, bordering on the miraculous, in the marvellous development of life it has produced in the Order. The Good Shepherd is a living evidence of the power of Catholic works when based on the authority of the Holy See.

CHAPTER IX

LAWSUIT AT POITIERS—TURIN—CANADA

1843-1844

Lawsuit against the religious at Poitiers—Letters from Mme. Pelletier—Foundation of the convent at Turin—Mme. Pelletier's letters—Interior of the Mother House—Mgr. de Hercé—Departure of the religious for Canada.

THE troubles in defence of her Constitutions in nowise interfered with Mother Pelletier's vigilant care of her immense flock ; her consolations were as ready as ever for those among her daughters who were in affliction. To do others good is to do good to oneself, to comfort others in the hour of one's own trial is to help and strengthen oneself. This was Mother Pelletier's experience : coming out of herself to comfort others she drew peace into her own soul, and was enabled to rise superior to her own trials and crosses.

At the close of the year 1843, a storm suddenly burst over the little convent at Poitiers. One of the penitents, whose behaviour for three months had been such as to leave small hope of her conversion, in a fit of rage demanded to leave the house. It was thought prudent not to let her go while the fit was on her, so she was kept till the next day. Acting under advice given her by an enemy of the house, she laid hold of

this circumstance, and lodged a complaint before the magistrates, accusing the Sisters of having forcibly detained and beaten her. She also showed marks on her person which she had inflicted on herself, but which she attributed to violent usage from other penitents. Without further parley two nuns and nine penitents were forthwith arrested and committed to prison. News of the affair had barely reached the Mother-General before she started for Poitiers, but she arrived too late to do more than comfort her daughters and exhort them to submission to the will of God. After her return to Angers she wrote to them :—

“O day of woe ! where are you, my beloved daughters, and where our poor imprisoned Sisters ? One thing only do I know, my afflicted children—you are with God ; for He fills all places, even gaols and horrible courts of law, with His Divine Presence. I beseech Him to dry your tears with His own Divine Hand, and to enable you to realise my grief caused by your sorrows. Oh, how dear you are to the Institute ! Poor children ! you suffer much and cause all of us the like sorrow ! How many tears this dreadful prosecution has cost us ! The authorities of Poitiers have written to those of Angers. The town is in commotion and the Congregation is praying and weeping here and everywhere. There was never so much work nor greater trust in God. *Fiat !* But I hear you answer, ‘O Mother, after all it is not prison or the assizes yet!’ which is quite true, my dearest children, but it prevents my answering your three most affecting letters.

“I have just given yours, my dear daughter, to Monseigneur, for it was perfectly written and expressed. But how did you find time for it? You did find time, at any rate, to comfort me somewhat. Oh! how I thank you for it! Write to us, if but two lines: Has the trial taken place? My God! come to my assistance. We do indeed owe a great debt of gratitude to his Lordship the Bishop of Poitiers, to all his clergy, and to those dear ladies! and how we shall pray for them!

“Adieu, daughters of Charity! I bless you always, and am, in the sacred and afflicted Heart of Jesus, your loving Mother, MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA.”

The religious were kept in prison a week, but were not deprived of the consolation of hearing Mass and receiving Holy Communion. The priest to whom they owed these privileges, a zealous servant of God, was M. de Larnay, the pious founder of the great convent of Lapuy. His consoling words were also very precious to them.

The Sisters and penitents had to appear at the assizes, but were acquitted; and forthwith the entire Community hastened to fulfil certain promises made to Heaven, and specially to St. Philomena, for the happy issue of this sad affair.

On the feast of the Presentation Mother Pelletier wrote to the religious :—

“To my three dear liberated captives—greeting

in our Lord,—The Lord God, whom we love and serve, has just delivered you from the jaws of lions, the claws of tigers, the tongue of the serpent, the rage of the wicked. Oh, my tender, faithful doves, bless Him in the holy Ark, into which His love has brought you back! You come from martyrdom, my very dear daughters; your sorrows have quite crushed us; we could bear no more. And what of you? for you have indeed been tried as gold in the crucible. Now you will be fit for any and everything.

“Farewell, my dear daughters. I can say no more; but now you are safe, and I shall soon recover.—Your loving Mother in Jesus Christ,

“MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA.”

Mother Pelletier's life, like that of every great servant of God, especially those who have founded Orders, was a tissue of vicissitudes. On the one hand crosses, on the other Divine favours. Crosses for the soul, which, taking its stand by the Crucified to continue the painful sacrifice of Christian expiation, becomes more and more purified, rises in the scale of perfection, and accumulates supernatural merit; but blessings for the work undertaken for God's glory, the success whereof, ever more wondrous, is the reward of, and compensation for, interior anguish and merits hidden from all but Him who sees in secret. The dew of heaven is shed on the Good Shepherd, while the Mother's soul is in anguish.

It was while she was at Poitiers, at the very time the struggle for the independence of the Order was at

its full height, that the Sisters destined for Turin left Angers, under the direction of Mother de Pechmann, their Superior. According to arrangements made by Count de la Marguerita to supply all their needs for the journey, they were met in Paris by the Sardinian ambassador, in Lyons by the consul, and, on the further side of the Alps, by Italian couriers. At Turin they were kindly received by the Bishop, Mgr. Fransoni, and their own Superior, Canon Hiberi, as well as certain pious persons attached to the court. The King was to allow them an annual pension of 3000 francs, and sent them vestments and sacred vessels for their chapel. The bearers of these gifts were Charles and Philomena, the son and daughter of Count and Countess de la Marguerita, who had been benefactors to the foundation, and had prepared a beautiful monastery for the Sisters' reception, besides showing them much kindness on their arrival; they also stood as sponsors for the convent bell.

All this goodness shown to her daughters and their delight in it, went far to comfort Mother Pelletier in her own sorrows. The following letter is one she wrote to Mother Pechmann when she came back from Poitiers:—

“God be praised, my dearest daughter! By this time I hope you and your daughters are in your dear and holy monastery at Turin. Oh, my child! what delight your letter from Lyons gave me. I am setting all else aside to answer it at once, but not doing

myself the least violence, I assure you. I suffered as cruelly as you did. I had not courage to stay for the parting; but I have paid dear for my weakness, for when I came back to find you gone, I suffered more. What a sad journey I made those two nights! The sword pierced my heart both for you and for our poor Sisters at Poitiers. But, my child, all this tends to God's glory, does it not?

"The details of your letter are really interesting; the delicacy of that pious Count de la Marguerita's attentions is quite delightful. Oh, if he were minister in France, our innocent Poitiers Sisters would not be the victims of impiety. We do not know their fate yet, but are sure of one thing: God will be glorified. You shall hear everything we hear.

"I know you will be the joy of our Institute and the consolation of the Mother, to whom you are very dear. Oh, my dear Sister Mary Euphrasia of Jesus! I do not distrust you, as full well you know. Do not allow yourself to think I should have succeeded better at Turin than you. I have no charm about me except in the eyes of my children, who are my glory and crown in Jesus Christ.

"Be very faithful then. Oh, try all of you to be very holy. I embrace you and my good daughter, Mary of St. Germain, then my three little doves, Sisters Mary of St. Philomena, St. Ireneus, and St. Acapes.

"We are waiting for news of you from your house at Turin, and shall answer at once.

"I bless you more and more, and am, with affection,

my beloved daughter, in union with the Most Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, your very loving Mother,

“MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA.

“I think our dear Sisters who went to Nice and Genoa must have reached their respective destinations. What you tell us about Lyons is delightful. You were quite right. What you say of our Sisters is a great comfort to me. Please give my tender, affectionate regards to the Countess and her dear children, whom I love much. And, my daughter, I do really esteem that Consul of Lyons also !”

“Mind you write to Monseigneur d’Angers and tell him of all these consolations.”

Mother de Pechmann, the Superior at Turin, was a religious of great promise. She was young, but already far advanced in virtue. She was also of a highly cultured mind, and spoke several languages. She was, altogether, a person capable of rendering valuable service to the Institute, and it was the Mother-General’s hope, in sending her to Turin, that she would give a high idea of the Order in that capital which was then very Catholic, and where a great future might be in store for the Good Shepherd.

She wrote thus to her:—

“‘The Lord has rebuilt Sion!’

“Never, my beloved daughter, has any foundation

begun with such great blessings on it as that of Turin. How your affectionate, devoted letter comforted us! Oh, with God and you, my dearest daughter, we shall indeed do great things. To see you set over that dear flock pleases His Divine goodness, and rejoices my heart. Be then very faithful, my dear children, and count on my loving and cherishing you in my heart.

“I approve of all your plans for the buildings, and see everything in the same light as you. I will write to you again in a few days. I am so overwhelmed, and unwell too, that I have not a moment except to bless and embrace you. In union with the Most Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, your much attached Mother,

MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA.

“Our two innocent victims have been in prison since Sunday last, imagine my grief!”

She had more zeal than bodily health, and sickness often hampered her energies. Not to be able to correspond with her daughters as often and promptly as she wished was always a source of suffering to her.

Thus she wrote:—

“‘Wait patiently for the Lord!’

“Oh, what patience you need, my good, dearest child, and how sorry for your sake I am that I have been ill and have kept you in suspense, you who are among the most devoted of my daughters. Tears

dim my eyes while I write to you. God is doing great things at Turin through you, my dear child. In the fulness of my gratitude I wanted to write to our illustrious founder and father. I hope soon to do so, and next week there will be forty Communions offered for him and the Countess and their family, especially the dear grandson, Emmanuel, whom I always remember.

“Your Community letter is perfect: say so to Sister Mary of St. Radegonde, whom I tenderly bless in our Lord, as well as to all our other dear daughters, beginning with good Mother St. Germain, who is always very dear to me.

“You have done all you could for Alexandria, my devoted daughter; I think it is best not to talk of it. Courage!

“Your Mother who loves you in our Lord, and will always stand by you,

“MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA.”

Encouraged by Mother-General, Mother de Pechmann set to work to establish her convent in a poor quarter of Turin. From the windows of the house, the distant view stretches over wooded hills on the further side of the Pô, and pleasantly embraces the beautiful Church of the Superga, where lie buried all the kings who have reigned in Piedmont since Victor Amadeus II., the first King of Sardinia, built the church in our Lady's honour, to commemorate the relief of Turin in 1706. The religious of the Good

Shepherd, beholding from afar the spot where Charles Albert, their founder and benefactor, lies buried, under the protection of our Blessed Lady, may meditate on the emptiness of all human greatness, except when under the shelter of religion. It was said of Charles Albert, "He fought like a hero, lived like a monk, died like a martyr."

The quarter of the town where Mother de Pechmann built her convent seems to have received the special blessing of God for the foundation of great works of charity. Dom Bosco's marvellous establishment, where thousands of children have been educated, and hundreds of missionaries and nuns trained in apostolic devotion, is situated there. From their garden, the religious of the Good Shepherd could hear the voices of his children when they chanted the Offices of the Church, or sang hymns to celebrate departures for foreign missions. More than once Dom Bosco came himself to the Good Shepherd to exercise the sacred functions of his ministry. Between these two great nineteenth century Saints, Dom Bosco and Mother Pelletier, there was the similarity of a common devotedness to the salvation of sinners; and his ardent spirit, always burning with zeal for souls, must have been stirred to fresh enthusiasm by the sight of her work.

Mother Pelletier's influence still lived in Turin years after the foundation was made. Madame du Ronsier, Superior of the Sacred Heart, was wont to say that, as a very young religious, she had learnt

much by seeing how Mme. Pelletier directed her household and daughters, but had still more admired the angelic piety with which this great servant of God spent her every leisure moment before the Blessed Sacrament.

When death divides two souls that have been united in doing good, as were those of Mme. Pelletier and M. de Neuville, the survivor's chief consolation must be the assurance of the other's eternal bliss. Count de Neuville died peacefully on the 3rd December 1843. From the appearance of his poverty-stricken looking bed-chamber, its dilapidated tiled floor and dingy walls, the poor furniture of his dwelling, one would have supposed him to be a poor man, and such, indeed, had for years been his actual life in its fasting, mortification, and vigils (he always rose at midnight to recite the Office of the Immaculate Conception); but his soul was rich in self-sacrifice, full of zeal for Mary's honour and for that most dear to her, the glory of her Divine Son and the salvation of souls.

From the very first Mother Pelletier's work excited his admiration; it appealed to his zeal with such practical results that he put his large fortune at her disposal, and sold the home of his fathers to support "the work of the Divine Shepherd." He was really the founder of the Community. His letters to Mother Pelletier, full of admiration for the servant of God, show him to have been as utterly detached from the world as is possible. He carefully preserved every letter she wrote to him, and used to read them over

to rouse himself to the love of God and his neighbour. He only burnt them in his last sickness at her special request.

In gratitude towards him she had a specially solemn Requiem service celebrated for him in her church in the presence of Mgr. Angebault. She also sent a circular letter to all her houses, ordering a service, a certain number of general Communions, also that the *De Profundis* should be said for three months. She had the portrait of M. de Neuville, the kind father who was the Providence of the Good Shepherd until his death, painted by Mlle. Pauline Perdreau, afterwards a religious of the Sacred Heart.

M. de Neuville had counted on Mother Pelletier's prayers for his soul, and he was not disappointed. The letter here given is the last he wrote to her; it is dated 12th March 1843 :—

“MADAME,—This is at last the vigil of St. Euphrasia's feast, of her whose steps in the desert you have both traced and followed. If she had the one advantage over you, of sacrificing an immense fortune to her Heavenly Spouse, you enjoy a happiness she did not possess. For thirty days she carried great loads of stone, and you, for seven years, have carried living stones to build everywhere spiritual temples to the Lord, wherein the Saviour finds His delight. Oh, how dear are you to that Sister of the Angels, your amiable patroness. You are the beloved of God and of man, and to you I trust my salvation; and if,

through the efficacy of your prayers, I shall ever find myself upon that mountain *where is seen what here we believe*, I shall know better how to express my respect and gratitude.

“On this day you will have a special wealth of favours to bestow, which emboldens me to make the humble request that Philomena may receive the holy habit.—Your unworthy servant, NEUVILLE.”

Mother Pelletier always held good *Father* de Neuville in most grateful remembrance, and looked upon every good man, who afterwards helped her with devotion in her work, as another M. de Neuville sent by God. It was to do honour to his memory that, stimulated by the recollection of his encouragement, she began to enlarge her convent, and build the Novitiate, which was eventually to be the largest in Europe. She wrote the following letter to Mother de Pechmann, on December 17th, 1843:—

“‘Lord, Thou visitest me in the morning and then triest me.’

“My good and well-beloved daughter, come and comfort us with a letter giving news of your dear selves. It is very, very long since I had any. I have never felt so desolate in sorrow as in the few last days. Come, my child, you who are so good, so true; come and comfort me. Our good father is dead. Oh, what a blow it is. But he is in heaven, I feel sure, and I tell you, confidentially, that much has already

happened in the Institute. I think we are going to receive very great graces. We expect some very real ones for the beloved tribe in Turin, which the most Holy Mother of God cherishes in her Heart, together with you, my five very dear doves whom I tenderly love. I think your good King must have arrived. How much we pray for his preservation and that of the Queen. Tell us about them, and M. de la Margherita, who seems to me to have much the same character as our lamented *Father* de Neuville—a further reason for my loving and respecting him. Please offer my affectionate respects to him and Mme. de la Margherita.

“Our Sisters at Genoa say your work will be a grand one. Oh, tell us all about it. Are you able now to have penitents, those objects of the love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus? And your good little girls—are they going on well? We are longing for the fine weather, that you may begin to build. Yes, my daughter, we are just of your mind about the works, and I think our good Sister St. Germain will help us much.

“Now for a council secret. Trusting in Divine Providence, we are going to build, in honour of our incomparable founder’s memory, the best and largest Novitiate in Europe. Oh, pray that God may come to our assistance.

“Behold, all the nations are flocking to your cradle. Are not your postulants coming too? We are making everything ready.

“Farewell, my dearest daughters. I bless you all in Jesus Christ. Farewell, my good Mary of St. Euphrasia of Jesus. Believe in the unalterable attachment of your devoted

“MOTHER MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA.”

The Novitiate was daily increasing. Postulants came, not only from every part of France, but from several European countries; and the classes for living languages—Italian, English, and German—which the Mother had established, were kept up with regularity.

Early in 1844 some ladies from Luxembourg, who at one time had thought of founding a House of Refuge in that country, arrived to place themselves under the rule of the Good Shepherd as postulants.

The house was now altogether too small. The number of religious and novices exceeded 300, and neither dormitories, refectory, nor chapel held so many conveniently. Mother Pelletier set to the task, therefore, and spent her time in building and enlarging. Two chapels were added to the church, and dedicated respectively to St. Augustine and St. Philomena. The entrance-hall, which was falling to ruin, was reconstructed, and over it was contrived a large parlour for the reception of Bishops or other distinguished visitors.

High up, on the exterior wall of the principal building, was raised the great clock, which more than twenty times a day sets the whole Community in motion. At its voice the two hundred nuns issue

from their cells and abruptly break off work, without a murmur to obey the call to prayer or recreation.

Mgr. de Hercé was still a true friend to the Good Shepherd, and came to examine foreign novices and assist at their profession. On the 6th of February he gave the habit to thirty-two postulants; on the 9th of the same month he professed thirteen novices; and then, after paying a few days' visit to the Archbishop of Tours, he came back and gave the habit to three Magdalens. On his return to his diocese he wrote to Mother Pelletier:—

“ April 9th, 1844.

“ MADAME, SUPERIOR-GENERAL,—The days the Lord permits me to spend under your roof are seasons of restful sweetness to me; the noisy clamour of the world's tumult is shut out, and all within is edification. It will be a great consolation to me to hear of all that God does for His own glory through your zeal, which is multiplied in all directions. My prayers will follow, across the ocean, those of your pious daughters whom the Lord has called to Montreal and Louisville. My heart goes out, too, in greeting to the dear English and Italian postulants; they have closed their eyes to the world to see nothing but the Cross. Remember me also to your daughters of the four nations.”

Twelve days later Mgr. Hercé returned to celebrate the feast of the Good Shepherd, to give the habit to nineteen postulants, and receive the vows of seven novices. He also administered the Sacrament of

Confirmation to two negro girls, of twelve and fourteen. M. Olivieri, a Genoese priest, who had redeemed them from slavery in Upper Egypt, had placed them under Mother Pelletier's care.

Between the two visits of Mgr. de Herc , the Mother Foundress had gone to Paris, to settle some difficulties in the house in the Rue Plumet.

The departure of the Sisters who had been eight months since selected for Canada, gave the Mother an opportunity of showing her generous liberality. Her purse belonged to all her children, and she was well used to straiten her personal expenses for the support of her foundations. Mgr. Bourget had promised to defray the cost of the voyage; but when the time came, the good Bishop being in want of funds, made an appeal to the Propagation of the Faith. In spite of her poverty at that time Mother Pelletier, to hasten the departure of her daughters, defrayed the cost of their outfit, and made them a present of £80. It was for her such a happiness to send this first band of missionaries to the France beyond the ocean. Nor did God fail to reward her by procuring for her children, on reaching Montreal, the most cordial reception from both clergy and laity.

In the course of the first year, the house at Montreal received sixteen penitents; numerous postulants came also, and, at their profession, sent letters of submission to the Mother-General.

Canada was her reward for many labours. It has remained a most Catholic country since the seven-

teenth century, when Frenchmen carried thither their language, their piety, their loyalty to the faith. The mission work, to which her attraction had been always so strong, produced visible fruits in Canada; missionaries sprang out of the soil her daughters evangelised. The monastery at Montreal speedily became a faithful counterpart of the Good Shepherd of Angers in order, regularity, and religious exercises. Mgr. Bourget used himself to instruct the novices in the religious spirit. Two Jesuits, Fathers Luiset and Tellier, preached Retreats, and M. Mainguy (formerly the chaplain at Angers) visited the house. Generous friends, such as M. Laframboise and Mme. Quesnel, took the same place in regard to the Foundation that M. de Neuville and Mme. d'Andigné had held at Angers, and showed the same devotedness, the same generous liberality.

As the Church lives on tradition, so do her most faithful children follow the traditions of their predecessors. The great religious Orders, Cistercians, Benedictines, and Franciscans, construct their convents in different lands, after the models inherited from their founders. In the same way Mother Pelletier recommended her daughters, in their missions, to copy the Mother House, in the religious spirit especially. Nothing pleased her better than to hear from some distant house on the borders of an American forest or lake that it was the Good Shepherd of Angers reproduced, with the same arrangement of classes, the same fervour and recollection, the same zeal for the Divine glory and salvation of souls.

She repeatedly begged that she might be told every detail of the voyage, and followed it with intense interest. When the journal of their voyage came, she gathered her Community to read it to them, who, flocking around her, drank in every word, and listened eagerly to the tale of hap and mishap. How a heavy cart had knocked over the vehicle just as they were entering the gates of Havre; how the Ursulines gave them shelter, dressed their bruises, and treated them as Sisters. Then the voyage itself, those forty days of alternating hope and fear; the arrival at New York; the beautiful day spent at the Convent of the Sacred Heart, where they communicated, and were just in time for the closing devotions of the month of May. Then their visit to the Bishop, his praise of the Good Shepherd, and plans for a great foundation in his diocese. Next the journey from New York to Montreal, through vast forests, such as never, even in dreams, had they imagined. The ascent of rivers, in comparison to which those of France are mere streamlets, or sail over lakes, which at first they mistake for seas, and so, at length, reach the end of their journey, where, 1200 leagues from the land of their birth, the Lord has prepared them a flock which will be as dear to them as children to their Mother, a flock they long to behold and gently lead to the Divine Shepherd.

Such letters from beyond the ocean, read aloud by the Foundress to her daughters, who hang upon her every word, make her own heart throb with joy, and

the hearts of her novices with the enthusiasm of their apostleship. The noble deeds, the generous sacrifices of those we have known and loved, have the salutary effect of inspiring us with the courage of brave resolve.

Every member of Mother Pelletier's flock came in for some share of her delicate attention. Through her own heart she reached the hearts of others. She treated every one, even the penitents, gently and persuasively, and no will, however obdurate, could finally resist her. It is to be noticed that in the circular-letter she addressed to all her houses after the lawsuit at Poitiers, she tells her religious in directing their penitents, even in the most difficult cases, to use no other method than that commended by the Institute, great gentleness, and great kindness; the method, not only the most truly Christian, but the most efficacious. Odilon Barrot said, after a visit to one of the Penitents' classes at the Good Shepherd—"What I saw was like a community of religious; the faces were so calm, the whole bearing so modest and edifying."

In 1844 took place the conversion of a young penitent, to whom the name of Egypta had been given. She had caused much trouble to the Mistress of the large class through her bad conduct, and at last declared her obstinate determination to leave the house and go to perdition in the world. The Mistress, Mother Mary of St. Vincent, having vainly tried every measure that her zeal and charity suggested (she was full of resources in saving souls), made up her mind to go to

Mother Foundress with her trouble and ask for her advice. When the tale was told, the servant of God made this reply—"Have confidence, my dear daughter. The Lord will change the wolf into a lamb. I will go now and pray for that intention, and then I will go into the class for a few moments."

This she did about an hour after, but, alas! only to find the penitent more than ever determined to leave the Good Shepherd. The Mother called her to her, made the sign of the Cross on the girl's forehead, and said, "Now, dear child, go; go, if you have the courage to do it, where the devil calls you." Touched by her words, the girl fell on her knees before her, begged her pardon, and asked to remain at the Good Shepherd, and from that day forth behaved in the most edifying manner, and finally died happily.

CHAPTER X

MOTHER PELLETIER'S JOURNEY TO LONDON

1844

Visit to London—England as it strikes the traveller—Mother Pelletier in London—Her return through Lille, Amiens, and Sens—The religious life at the Good Shepherd—Mother Pelletier's devotion to the Saints—Consolations derived from her convents—Her union with them.

FOR four years the religious in London had been longing for a visit from their Mother-General; but not only had pressure of various other business prevented her from going, but she shrank from laying aside her religious dress to visit a Protestant country.

"I have worn this holy habit for thirty years, and I cannot make up my mind to put it off. I will go to London when I can go as a religious."

A change had come by slow degrees; the government was more tolerant, the people were larger-minded. The nuns in London had worn their habit in passing though the streets to move from one house to another. Sister St. Celestine Fisson had worn hers when travelling from London to Angers (to go thence to Montreal), and there was nothing to hinder the Mother from appearing in hers.

In the spring of 1844, therefore, she set out, ac-

accompanied by Mme. de Couëspel and a novice. The passage was good, the whole journey prosperous, and at Dover a little incident occurred which seemed a happy omen for the Mother's entrance into the Island of Saints. Some poor Catholic women, perceiving that she wore the religious dress, brought their children to her to be blessed.

When, in the month of June, one quits France, with its sunny fields studded with spring flowers of varied hue, to land on the foggy shores of England, where every field is of one hard shade of green that seems incapable of variety of tone, one experiences a sensation of astonishment bordering on depression. On the French side of the Channel everything seemed gay, perhaps to excess; but here everything is calm, almost to gloominess. The Channel divides not only two countries that look unlike, but two peoples unlike in temperament. St. Evremond said, "The French speak too much and think too little; the English think too much and speak too little."

The rapid journey from Dover to London is made through Kent and Surrey, counties whose fields are as green as the grass of carefully kept French pleasure-grounds, offer a certain repose to the sight, but the intense monotony of the scene at last leaves only an impression of tedious uniformity. There is no life in the landscape except flocks of sheep and cattle. Brick houses, forming villages and towns, are plentifully distributed along the borders of the railroad, and, to the newly-arrived Frenchman, seem like so many human

beehives all planned and built on the same pattern. Still the look of orderliness and neatness produced by this symmetry, impresses him to a certain extent. As he draws nearer the capital he no longer sees villages, but populous towns of increasing magnitude. He thinks he is in London before he actually reaches it, and, when really there, how strange an aspect everything wears to him, especially if, like Mme. Pelletier, he arrive at night.

A huge cloud hangs over the town, through which, from unseen sources, light is diffused; then, gradually, through the undecided black and white shades of fog, gaslights begin to twinkle from street, railway-station, and dock. He might imagine himself to be entering a city where 100,000 smiths, illuminated by their own furnaces, are working at their forges. Then a dull roar rising up from the town meets his ears, the noise of vehicles and moving trains, of machinery pounding iron. Then the Thames becomes visible with its black waters, ploughed by hundreds of steam-boats and others, and by cumbrous barges laden with coal and wood.

The traveller, visiting England for the first time, is prepared (especially if he does not speak the language) for new sensations when he finds himself fairly in the heart of London. A strange impression is made upon him by the busy crowd rushing hither and thither through the streets, their faces wearing the anxious look that belongs to business; and he may perhaps ask himself why all are hurrying, since none seem to

reach any goal. The scene reminds the beholder instinctively of that never-ending, pauseless race, in which the craving for happiness common to all mankind makes all engage, striving after that which no one wins. Such was the powerful picture of life and its feverish conditions to those whom the business or pleasures of the world whirl onwards, held up to Mother Pelletier's gaze as she passed through the dense crowd that peoples the vastest capital of Europe. And into this human mass of confusion she came, acting under the impulse of the Spirit of God, not counting the cost of her marvellous self-sacrifice, for the redemption of souls, to find, if it may be but a few, stray sheep among the lost, and restore them to their Lord.

The religious arrived in London by the Paris train at 10 o'clock in the evening, a day earlier than they were expected at Hammersmith, and were rather uncertain as to where to spend the night; but a person who had travelled with them from Calais took them to a hotel conducted on the French system. It turned out that the proprietor of this hotel, M. Pagliano, was one of the chief benefactors of the Good Shepherd in London, and next day Mme. Pagliano, not only refused all payment, but begged to be allowed to have the honour of conducting the little party to Hammersmith. There all was joy, religious and penitents vieing with each other to give the French Mother a worthy reception. The passages, even, were all decked with wreathes and such humble draperies

as could be got, and the general effect was good enough to recall the shores of the Maine and the convent at Angers, and Mother Pelletier was much touched. The first thing she noticed was the cross over the convent gate, at that time probably the only one so placed in London. Her first visit was to our Lord in the chapel, to make an act of thanksgiving, her next to the Vicar-Apostolic, Bishop Griffiths.

It grieved her in visiting different Catholic chapels not to find the Blessed Sacrament in them, for at that time, from motives of prudence, it was reserved in the sacristies only. She said afterwards, in speaking to her Community, "When we were in England, my heart felt a sharp pain when I went into a church in London, and saw no lamp before the altar. Where are you, my Divine Master? I said to Him interiorly. The clergyman who accompanied us answered my thought and said to us, 'The Blessed Sacrament is not here. He is still hidden as one proscribed'—'Father,' I replied, 'He will always be King in this Isle of Saints.' We were then taken to the sacristy, where nothing bespoke the Presence of our Lord, save a little night light, which was dying out gradually before a cupboard, where He was shut up. Then I fell on my knees, and, while I adored Him, promised Him, whom the law proscribed, to build beautiful temples for Him in England."

Filled with ardent faith she suffered in the thought that the God of the Eucharist was obliged to hide in the kingdom where, for centuries, He had reigned. It

chilled her very heart to see the old English churches that have been taken away from the Catholics of England, and are now used for Protestant worship, our Lord dwelling in them no longer. To a pious person such as Mother Pelletier, a temple without the Tabernacle is a body without soul, warmth, or movement.

Her stay at Hammersmith brought blessings to the house. The lady patronesses, even those who were Protestants, asked to be allowed to call upon her, the wife of Sir Robert Peel, the Prime Minister, among them; Canon O'Neil, and the Rev. Mr. Long, Chaplain to the Community, were also introduced to her. She took part also in a ceremony to which she was invited, at the Benedictine Convent, where her daughters had been so hospitably entertained upon their arrival in England, the Abbess, Mrs. Selby, doing everything in her power to mark her respect for Mother Pelletier. But nothing did she value so much as the evident joy of her daughters and of their penitents. The latter (who were recent converts to the Catholic Church) asked leave to sing to her in their native language, which it grieved her not to understand. One of them wished to be taken to Angers to join the consecrated, a request the Mother was glad to grant. It was a first offering to God from that English convent on which she built great hopes for the future, all the greater because of the serious difficulties which had beset it at first. She said of it afterwards in one of her conversations, "That work in London occasioned us all manner of crosses—for more than ten





Convent of the Good Shepherd, Hammersmith, London

years it gave us trouble of every sort and kind ; but now you see, my dear daughters, how it prospers, how many souls it brings back to God. It shows that we should never be disheartened when houses do not succeed as we would wish."

She stayed only a few days in England. The climate affected her health, and a multiplicity of business claiming her presence in France, she was obliged unwillingly to leave her devoted daughters. But her visit, if short, had served, not only to arouse their zeal, but to awaken charity in their regard. Even Protestants gave them liberal alms, and the municipal authorities exempted them, as a charitable institution, from the payment of rates. Towards the close of the year five Protestants made their abjuration, thirteen their first Communion in the convent, and two penitents went to Angers to join the Magdalens' class. One of these had been summoned to nurse an infirm father, whose conversion she had had the joy of obtaining before his death, and then only had come to the convent. We have already noticed that, in common with all whom God has raised up and quickened with His Spirit to found religious Orders, Mother Pelletier, by the mere fact of her presence in her houses, not only stirred up her daughters' zeal, but excited charity in their favour, and attracted alms and warmer interest in their work.

On her way from London Mother Pelletier went to Lille. The Community there, under the wise and gentle rule of Mother Mary of the Angels' Levoyer,

had gone on in the perfection of regularity for eight years. Mother-General found the same arrangements as at Angers : penitents, boarders, and Magdalens. The house, however, was too small, and, on that account, unhealthy ; but, during the Mother's visit, M. Vander-crusse (a benefactor who had already furnished the cells of the religious in the manner laid down in the Rule) proposed to her to purchase a larger house, more healthily situated, to which part of the Community could be moved. This charitable project, of course, delighted her. She stayed at Lille a week.

Her next visit was to Amiens, and here sorrow awaited her, as it generally did after joy. Her daughters were very fervent but in great poverty. They had built their enclosure wall themselves with bricks made and baked in the convent, for the religious of the Good Shepherd can turn her hand to anything in the interests of her Order, and even become a bricklayer or carpenter. The foundation was still hampered by the debt incurred when it was made ; it was not even diminished, a state of finances intolerable to Mother Pelletier, who combined the bravery of a founder with the prudence of a wise administrator, and could not bear her houses to be in debt.

She next visited Rheims, where the Superior, Sister Mary of St. Emeritus Royer, received her with truly filial tenderness, and had the satisfaction of being able to show her an admirably well-ordered house, classes properly arranged, a Community the perfection of regularity.

At Sens Mother Pelletier found her daughters sorely pressed, their house not large enough and without water supply, the mayor of the town at enmity with them. But the interest the Archbishop (then lately appointed) took in the Community, was all the greater on account of their many trials, and he proposed to Mother Foundress to buy a new house, a proposal most welcome to her zeal. It was at this time that the church of the Holy Martyrs SS. Savinian and Potentian was purchased, together with a fine large building which the proprietor sold on terms very favourable to the Order. Mme. Perthuis, ever generous to the Good Shepherd, helped Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia to make this purchase, and the Martyr Saints, too, whose tombs were there, perhaps lent their protection.

But, with the servant of God, sorrow always quickly succeeded joy. In Paris she found both her houses in difficulties: one weighed down by excessive rent, the other undergoing trials from its committee of patrons; and with Mother Pelletier it rested to find means of relief for both.

Each time that Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia returned to her convent at Angers, after visiting other of her houses, the religious life in the different classes seemed to become fuller and more superabundant; joy shone on her children's faces, song burst spontaneously from their lips, and the happiness all felt in once more seeing a Mother so good, so devoted, was expressed in charming little dialogue plays; she her-

self thoroughly rejoicing meanwhile in the happiness of others, and affectionately delighting in everything done for her pleasure, so that she made others happy in return.

She reached Angers on the 26th June, having hastened back full of anxiety about the First Assistant, Sister Mary of St. Chantal Laroche, who had been struck by paralysis. There were, moreover, twenty-six postulants who were to take the habit on the 4th August, an unusually large number at one time. Mgr. de Herc , who came to preside, preached sermons in French, English, German, Italian; and the novices pronounced their vows each in her mother tongue, a circumstance which greatly interested the large audience.

But these happy events were saddened for Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, by painful news which reached her on the 1st of August. We know how tenderly devout she was to the Blessed Mother of God, and she now learned that a Protestant minister, who had come to Angers to open a chapel, had, in his sermons, attacked our Lady's virginity and her Immaculate Conception. These vile insults so profoundly afflicted Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia that she promised a Community procession in the Blessed Virgin's honour, every day in August. To such devotional practices her fervent piety instinctively inclined. She treated our Blessed Lady and the Saints in heaven just as she did people on earth. When she wanted to give thanks or gain favours, her impulse was to manifest

her feelings in some public act of gratitude or submission. Her piety was full of vitality, and lavish in pious demonstration. It was to her a beautiful thing to hear the Blessed Virgin's litanies resounding through her cloisters; to sing the praises of the Immaculate Conception was her way of preaching it.

Another point in which her spirit of religion manifested itself was in the reception of Bishops visiting the Good Shepherd. She welcomed all who came with joy and respect, congratulating herself when she could present postulants or novices to them to be clothed or professed. In 1844 she thus welcomed M. Soyer, Bishop of Luçon, who gave the habit to five postulants. This pious prelate, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia looked upon as a Confessor of the Faith. While still a youthful Priest, during the Revolution, he had taught a large number of children their catechism at the peril of his life, and, guarded by Vendean soldiers, gave them their first Communion, one spring night, in a valley of the Hirôme. He came to the Good Shepherd just after having made a pilgrimage to that very valley. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, who had been brought up in the midst of living memories of the Vendean wars, and had, in her childish days, borne the sorrows of an exile for the faith, rejoiced in seeing her daughters receive the veil at the hands of this holy prelate who was also Bishop of her birthplace.

A month later came Mgr. Regnier, the former Superior of the Good Shepherd, who rejoiced still to find

the piety and regularity of early days in the house, now so large and populous.

On the 2nd October Mgr. de Herc , the friend whose constancy never failed, came again and received the vows of twelve novices and gave the veil to two German postulants. Just about this time this same pious Bishop wrote a letter to the Cardinal Protector speaking of Mother-General in the highest terms.

However zealous in her readiness to accede to proposals for foundations, Mother Pelletier always exercised the greatest prudence where the interests of other Communities were implicated. Provided God Almighty were glorified and good work done, she was satisfied. It happened about this time that the Apostolic Prefect of Madagascar, M. Dalmont, visited the Good Shepherd, and, conceiving an immense admiration for their work, especially the trades established in the classes, asked for a foundation of the Order in Madagascar; he even wrote to one of the Ministers petitioning for a free passage for the nuns in a vessel belonging to the State, which was granted. Novices were meantime prepared for the mission, into the spirit of which they entered with great zeal. M. Dalmont, however, changed his mind, and, before leaving France, came to tell Mother Superior that he was going to take out Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny for his foundation. This order was already established in the island. No sign of annoyance escaped Mother Pelletier; she simply regarded M. Dalmont's change of mind as a manifestation of the Divine Will, and

encouraged him to have perfect confidence in the Sisters he had chosen. No jealous partiality for her own Community ever led her into rivalry with any other Order. All Orders to her were members of the family of Christ, and in their prosperity and extension she rejoiced sincerely.

Her mind was fertile in the invention of methods for keeping up fervour and piety in her convent, such as processions in honour of our Lady or the erection of statues of the Saints in the cloisters; and, such was her love of surrounding herself with the venerable relics of the holy Martyrs, that she almost converted the Good Shepherd into a vast reliquary. We have spoken before of her living faith in the dogma of the Communion of Saints; it was to her the source of consolation and blessing. Who shall measure the sum of strength and sweetness her Christian soul derived for her difficult and important work, from ever gazing on the Saints, who bear up our prayers to the throne of God, united to their own, and return, bringing the graces God has vouchsafed to their intercession; from ever listening to and obeying their heavenly admonitions; from being conscious, in every detail of religious life, of the sanctifying presence of those blessed souls whose relics our worship honours, and of forming, together with them, one compact spiritual society for the glory of God and the salvation of souls; of fixing the mind for ever on the things of heaven, taught by their example? All these were habitual practices with Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia.

On the 16th September 1844 she arranged a beautiful ceremony for the reception of the reliquary of a holy Martyr, St. Victor, sent to her from Rome, through the exertions of her daughters of the Holy Cross and the Cardinal Protector. She received these holy relics with a procession, altars of repose, and every solemnity befitting the advent of a great Protector, for such indeed she esteemed the Saint; and to perpetuate the memory of the day, named one of her daughters Mary of St. Victor. Delicate in all her dealings with her fellow-creatures on earth, it may be fitly said she also dealt delicately with the Saints in glory who were the patrons of her house. She honoured them with every device and with all the pomp of ceremony at her command, and made their names familiar by using them among her daughters.

In the month of October she sent five of her daughters to Dôle, in the Jura, where a pious, unmarried lady desired that a foundation should be established, to which, being conveniently situated on the borders of Switzerland, the Bishop of Geneva might send any penitents who applied to him. Soon news reached Mother-General of the destitute state of the foundation, which was deprived of all resources. She began by comforting and encouraging her daughters as best she could; but at last, finding no relief came, decided to break up the establishment, and wrote telling the Superioress to go to Perpignan. The Assistant-Superioress, however, Mother Rogerson, an English-woman, could not bear the idea of yielding because of

difficulties, and petitioned to be allowed to stay and continue the work. What cannot an English heart, do, fortified by the grace of apostleship? By the blessing of God, Mother Rogerson's zeal triumphed. She was ably assisted by the Rev. Mr. Léger, and in a few months the house at Dôle had its two classes, —penitents and Preservation children.

In the year 1844 Mother-General was greatly consoled by the extension her work took and the progress made by her foundations. Letters from her daughters, recording marvellous conversions, in which it pleased God to use them as His instruments, reached her from time to time, rewarding and consoling her for all her crosses. One letter, from Louisville, told her that her daughters there, during the year, had prepared twelve penitents for baptism, who had received the sacrament with the greatest devotion. Such news more than compensated her for many sorrows. Again, from Louisville, came news of three poor Protestant girls finding their way to the Good Shepherd and asking to be admitted and taught the Catholic religion. One, who was very ill, was supported by the two others; all were admitted, but from the first it was evident the sick girl's condition was hopeless. At her own request she was put under instruction. A few days later Mgr. Flaget came to finish her preparation, and gave her Holy Baptism and Communion as the Holy Viaticum. She received the Holy Eucharist with deep piety, and, while making her act of thanksgiving, fell asleep to wake in heaven and there continue it eternally.

These accounts of conversions moved Mother Pelletier's heart; she had longed that the Good Shepherd might do such works as these. Again, from Louisville came stories of apostolic charity. The Bishop of Texas arrived one day at the convent; he was clothed in goat-skin, and had but temporarily escaped from his poor mission among savages and savage races. Mother Prioress manufactured a cassock for him out of the cloaks the religious wore on the voyage from France, which he gratefully accepted, saying, "Next year I am to travel in France, and I hope to visit your good Mother at Angers—that is, if I am not eaten meantime by my charitable people." He kept his promise and paid the visit. She had rejoiced unspeakably in this charity of her daughters.

From London, the religious wrote that, on the feast of the Presentation, thirteen penitents (of whom five had been Protestants) had received Holy Baptism from the Bishop, who had observed all the proper ceremonies for the reception of adult catechumens. From Nice, the religious wrote that a great Polish lady, Countess de Komar, who had come there for her health and died after a few months' stay, had asked to be buried in the Good Shepherd chapel, that her soul might share the grace of their prayers, and that her family had made a donation of 20,000 francs for the erection and maintenance of an Altar to our Lady of Seven Dolours.

From Grenoble came news of the enlargement of the house and the installation of the Magdalens;

from Nancy, of ninety penitents and sixty Preservation children in the Fold. From Genoa the constant theme was the mercy of God and the goodness of Marquis Pallavicini, who, for two years, devoted a portion of his income to the construction of dormitories, classes, a chapel, and the acquirement of a large airy country-house. All this good news from her foundations carried Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia up to the heights of Thabor, as she was wont to express it.

But soon again she was called down to walk along the rough way of Calvary. Her daughters at Sens wrote to her of annoyances of every kind to which the Mayor of the town subjected them, which culminated in his coming with policemen to violate the enclosure and force his way into the penitents' class, under pretext of rescuing persons detained against their will. He took down false depositions made by two of the penitents, both bad subjects, and summoned the Sisters to appear before a court of justice. Mother Foundress wrote encouraging them, and reminding them that the Christian religion teaches that the Cross is the seed of success. And in fact the storm passed away, and, thanks to their new Archbishop's kindness, the Community of Sens was transplanted to the magnificent convent of St. Peter-le-Vif, the finest monastery in the diocese, and close to the Church of St. Savinian, which is built on the spot where the Saint suffered martyrdom.

But probably no letters stirred the servant of God's heart more deeply than those appealing to her zeal

for the foundation of new houses. She would pray to God and consult Him as to her answers. Such a letter she received in 1844 from the Vicar-Apostolic of the Holy Land, asking for religious. The thought of her daughters dwelling in the land the Saviour watered with His Blood, must have awakened all her sympathies, but prudence forbade her undertaking a new foundation that year. She was already corresponding with Mgr. Guasco about foundations for Egypt, from which country a Genoese Priest had already sent her five young negresses. This Priest, M. Olivieri, happened to be at Angers when a letter arrived from Mgr. Guasco urging the speedy departure of the Sisters for Egypt.

CHAPTER XI

THE MOTHER-GENERAL—THE “CONSECRATED”

Mother Pelletier's anxiety for her houses : Perpignan and Turin—
The rule for the “Consecrated” is submitted to the Pope—
Description of the rule—She is consoled by conversions.

THE first result of the institution of the Generalat was the election of Mother Pelletier as General, and her actions at once proved her worthy of the title of Superior-General and of the favours granted by the Holy See. In this spirit she addressed her daughters as follows :—

“Now that we have obtained the grace by which our Institute is united under a Superior-General, with lavish blessings from the Head of the Church, the successor of St. Peter, who wishes our establishments to be spread over the whole world, you must go forth to pitch your tents in every corner of the earth. One town, one foundation must not suffice for your zeal ; it must embrace all the world.

“St. Paul said, ‘There is neither Gentile nor Jew, but Christ is all in all.’ And St. Francis Xavier was wont to say, ‘I am not only Spanish ; I am also Indian, Chinese, Japanese, in a word, I belong to every country where I preach the Gospel.’

“Now, my dear daughters, such should be your sentiments. A soul truly belonging to the Institute should live in such dispositions as these. It is time for us to awake and set out on our road. As we all are shepherds, or, if you prefer it, shepherdesses, we must not be attached to one small part of the earth. For my part I care not to be called French; I am Italian, English, German, Spanish, American, African, Indian, &c. I belong to every country where there are souls to save. We must not be afraid to carry our tents to far-off lands, when we see that there, also, are sheep to be led back to the Fold—American sheep, sheep of Africa, Asia, Oceania, all must be sought out. The more eager you are to answer the call, the greater will be your victory.

“And here, my children, I think I should impress upon you some important advice. You know the Gospel tells us that the Good Shepherd left ninety-nine sheep to seek one that was lost: in like manner, let us leave ninety-nine works to bring back the lost sheep of the House of Israel—I mean that, where you cannot establish all the classes, you should give the preference to the penitents and magdalens. I have remarked that the houses which are content with these two kinds of work always succeed. Another thing, my dear daughters: never found an establishment for magdalens unless you have suitable quarters for them. They need air, they need solitude; if you place them where there is neither a garden nor a suitable lodging for them, wholly separate from the

other classes, you will expose them to danger, to temptation. Here at Angers, the centre of the Institute, we multiply our departments, because we must necessarily train our novices for every one of the several classes ; but, as you are aware, we have separate blocks of buildings and an immense enclosure, and that there are plenty of conveniences for every requirement. The divers sections of the Community have no inter-communication ; there are plenty of mistresses, and for each class, a spacious garden."

Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia bore indeed the burden of "solicitude"¹ for all her houses, justifying, by devotedness to each, her title of Mother-General. No sooner did she know that any of her convents or daughters were in trouble or difficulty than she kept them in mind until relief was found or peace was restored.

She had thus constantly to watch over her Paris houses, which gave her much anxiety, for, owing to the cost of living and exorbitant rental, as well as to the difficulty of making charitable people either understand or appreciate the work, they were sorely hampered. In the beginning of 1845, however, the Bishop-Coadjutor of Louisville (Mgr. Chabrat) wrote to her from one of these houses, where he was spending the winter, that the Archbishop of Paris (Mgr. Affre), having made his visitation, had found it in excellent order, and sent her his congratulations and assurances of kindly interest. The convent at Angers was in the

¹ 2 Cor. xi. 28.

midst of rejoicing in other consolations when this news arrived, so welcome to all, but especially to Mother-General. Mgr. de Herc  was there for a few days, and, as usual, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia availed herself of his zeal to arrange for clothings and professions. This time, the baptism of a little negro girl, aged eight years, also took place, and the first communion of several others. The day before the latter ceremony, one of the little negresses died in most fervent sentiments of faith, asking her mistresses artless questions about heaven, where she was going.

A few days later, there came, from Perpignan, a letter, written in a tone of alarm, telling Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia that her daughters there neither could pay the debts incurred for their first installation, nor make the repairs their house urgently needed, and that the foundation would have to be given up unless Angers came to the rescue. That same evening Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia started for Perpignan. It was January, and the ground was covered with snow. In the wild mountain passes, through which the road leads, the snow lay several feet deep, and the public conveyance was stopped by it. Extra horses were put on, while a gang of labourers were set to the difficult task of clearing the road. Life itself seemed to be in peril, but the good Mother remained calm and undisturbed, keeping up the courage of her companion by exhorting her to have confidence in God.

At Perpignan the Bishop received her with deep respect, and was so impressed by her zeal and de-

votedness that he gave her a donation of 2500 francs out of his private purse, besides obtaining a loan for the distressed Community on which no interest was to be paid. From the funds of the Mother House the worthy Foundress added enough to pay off all debts and leave her daughters in restored peace and joy; her passage through their midst seemed to them as that of the Angel of the Resurrection.

On the 21st February she left for Angers, a journey of 200 leagues, braving the severity of winter to return to the Mother House and her duties there as Superior-General.

She used frequently to ask for news of foundations she could not visit. In the convent at Turin she took warm interest, it being a house in which she placed great hopes. The following letter is to the Superioress, Mme. Pechmann:—

“FROM OUR MONASTERY-GENERAL.

“‘Ask, and you shall receive!’

“Oh! do send us some news of yourselves, my good, dearest daughter. I am hungering for it; it is such a time since we had any. We too, my daughter, have been overwhelmed! Oh, if you only knew how hard your poor Mother has been working! In a week's time our Sisters will write and tell you of great things. But you, dear children, how are you going on? Let us hear all about you and about the great work at Turin. Can you tell us whether the pious Count de la Marguerita continues to take

the same interest in the mission at Turin? It will be a beautiful work some day. I think your building must be finished, and that you have many penitents and young Preservation children. But you will tell me all about everything, will you not, dear child? The house at Genoa is going on excellently and is doing great works. Write to me through the embassy: your letters come safely.

"Courage, my dearest daughter, and be very sure that our Lord will bless you."

Mother-General asks for so many details of information about the house at Turin, inquires so minutely about every religious there and the life and office of each, that it would seem that she had no thought for aught else.

"November 10th, 1844.

"'I will renew with my whole heart the vows I have made to my God.'

"I have the happiness, my good, dearest daughter, of being in Retreat, and it was there your good angel, who brought your little letter, found me. But it was a month old by the date, and you may suppose what pain this caused me. Before God, my beloved daughter, I think much, very much of you. You too are in solitude and will make much better use of it than your mother. I believe two things: first, this year you will work hard to become a saint; and secondly, that this year your work in Turin will be earnest and magnificent. The only complaint ever made of you

there, was coldness of manner, but, now that you have become so affable, you will do wonders, and this consoles me very much. As Turin is the royal residence you are set upon the candlestick, my dear daughters; people are always asking about Turin. But, my dear child, I assure you that I bless God for your success. Sixty young penitents already, and all your building done, why, it is marvellous! What you tell me of our little Sister pleases me. Give her, from me, the kiss of peace as well as to all our Sisters, but always first to our good Sister Mary of St. Germain.

“Avignon and Perpignan break my heart with their poverty, but our Sisters are so good. It cannot be helped; there must always be crosses. Your neighbours in Rome and Genoa are making admirable progress. Our Sisters at Amiens and those in Africa are doing well. What a comfort! Ten other houses are in a flourishing condition. Arles is saved and doing well. But, my daughter, my mind is ever occupied with the thought of a work for God’s glory, for which I also want your help, not money, but to get the pious Count de la Marguerita to give us a letter of recommendation. All Egypt is calling for us. In four days’ time our Sisters will send you all the notes, and you, my dearest daughter, you will stand by me. Will you not?

“Good-bye; from the depths of my desert I am, in God, your attached mother.

“Tell Sister Mary of St. Radegunda to write some pretty Community letters.”

Mother Pelletier had a presentiment that the convent in Turin would be a very important one, and wrote very often to Mme. de Pechmann, the Superior.

“FROM OUR MONASTERY AT ANGERS,
March 14th, 1845.”

“‘There shall be one Fold and one Shepherd.’”

“Oh, how far away you are, my good daughter, and I long so much to talk to you; you whose letters, thoughts, interior trials go to my very heart. I understand you so thoroughly, and God alone knows how closely we are united. Truly my confidence in you is unbounded. Your progress, your successes at Turin do not in the least astonish me. It was God’s will that you should be placed there, and you will be the greatest help to me, my dear daughter. The several works will become great and holy—our crosses are a proof of this. They win for us the favour of the Holy See. Everything that comes from Rome is sweetness, light, and strength. Our two monasteries there go on well—the Sovereign Pontiff and the saintly Cardinal guide us on our way. They love our work, and everything will turn out well. The progress of the work at Turin pleases them very much.

“Do all you can to correspond thoroughly with the views of the saintly Prince de la Marguerita. Yes! I will call him Prince. If you only knew how I love and revere him. Would that I were able to give it expression. How I thank you for the 250 francs.

It was truly a bouquet of flowers, my loving daughter, for I am in debt, but that does not disturb my peace of mind. They are our Blessed Lady's debts, for I undertook to feed her children; her heart will defray the cost; and I am helping her, for I work hard, but for love's sake. How delighted I am that Sister Mary of St. Radegunda is well. Tell her I love her better than ever, in God. All our dear daughters are a comfort to you, and that makes me happy. As for postulants, do not be anxious about them, my daughter. I care only for such as are to your liking, hence I would rather wait. Listen to me, my loving daughter. I am full of my great schemes and plans, and yet you know, I have not a sou; but, all the same, I anticipate great things.

"Now I am going to tell you a secret: if they go on persecuting my Sister Mary Teresa of Jesus I shall appoint her Superior at *Nice*: there is a Princess there whom the Divine Mary is keeping for us, and I can assure you great things will happen. Develop our work at Turin, my dear daughters; it is a royal work. Do not fail to come to the election: we shall understand each other thoroughly—what long talks we shall have! Do not be troubled about the temptations and cruel sufferings you have to undergo; you are suffering now, but the day will soon come when you will rejoice!

"Good-bye, my beloved daughter. I bless you, I embrace you, and am in the Most Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, Your affectionate Mother."

“FROM OUR MONASTERY AT ANGERS,
19th May.

“‘Why art thou sad, oh! my soul?’

“I am very disappointed, my dearest daughter, at not having heard from you for so long. What can be the matter with you? Perhaps you are going through great external trials, or you are very busy; perhaps even you may be ill. Whatever it is, do not think of going to Egypt without my blessing, but rather found a very holy, regular, and spacious convent for us at Turin. Write and give us news of our holy founder and of his illustrious family; write to me about anything you like, only do leave your prayers for a while, and come and console me with one of your letters. It seems to me, beloved Sister, that you are becoming very recollected, for you are living in a beautiful solitary place, far from the tumult of the world. This will enable you, my dearest daughter, to unite your soul to God, and thus to go on advancing in virtue. After very great trials and sufferings, our Lady and the Sovereign Pontiff have come to our assistance in a miraculous manner. We have received wonderful favours from Rome. Our dear Sister Mary of St. Aimée of Jesus is writing to tell you all about it.

“Do write soon, dear Sister Mary of St. Euphrasia, to your deeply attached Mother in our Lord.”

In the early months of 1845 Mother Pelletier's labours were heavy, but were compensated by many precious consolations. Mgr. Chabrat spent three weeks at the Good Shepherd, and was never tired

of praising her daughters in Kentucky. Another American Bishop, M. Haïlandière, came while he was there, and expressed great admiration for the organisation and Order of the Mother House. He had been anxious to see it before returning to his diocese of Vincennes in the United States.

These visits were followed by numerous applications for foundations. Cardinal de la Tour d'Auvergne wrote to ask that some Sisters might be sent to St. Omer, and, shortly afterwards, the Countess de la Grandville asked for Sisters to take the direction of an orphanage she had founded at Loos near Lille. As she was a benefactress of the convent at Lille, it was difficult to refuse her. Some Sisters were therefore sent, and, accompanied by the good Countess herself, took the place of the pious ladies who had hitherto directed the Orphanage.

In the month of January 1845, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia sent Mother Mary of St. Vincent of Paul Cornet to Rome, a Sister who held in the Community a high reputation for zeal and sanctity. She took with her the rule for the "Consecrated," which was to be submitted to Cardinal Patrizi's approval, and to Gregory XVI. for his blessing. The Holy Father took deep interest in this section of the flock of the Good Shepherd, and asked the Sister what were the methods she adopted to obtain the return to God of her beloved penitents; methods truly marvellous in their effects, but mainly consisting in the zeal with which the religious, by kindness and

devotedness to the external interests of sinful souls, lead them to wish for, and were it possible, to merit, so to speak, their conversion. By the rule for consecrated penitents, which Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia presented to the Pope for approval, a new class in the numerous Community was created, the *élite*, so to speak, of the sheep of the flock. The penitent who desired to enter the ranks of the "Consecrated" must have first spent, at least, two years in the penitents' class, where she must have shown herself humble, obedient, and exemplary in the other virtues of her state. She has to testify her willingness to spend the rest of her life under the rule to which she is subject; she must have the leave of her Confessor and of the Council of the Community. These preliminary requirements fulfilled, she becomes a probationer, and is distinguished from ordinary penitents by a change of attire. She is now clothed in a black dress and black kerchief, and wears a leathern girdle, the Blessed Virgin's livery. Her probation over, she makes her act of self-consecration to Mary, the Mother of God, kneeling at their choir grate before a Priest. This act of consecration, to be renewed yearly on St. Mary Magdalen's Day, consists of a promise to live under the obedience which she has freely chosen. Besides the prayers common to all the penitents, the "Consecrated" recite the Office of our Lady of Dolours. The devotion to our Lady of Dolours has been very widely practised in France, particularly in Anjou, ever

since the fifteenth century, and Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia deemed it good for the "Consecrated" to be accustomed to the contemplation of our Blessed Lady, receiving into her arms the lifeless Body of her Divine Son, to behold in spirit the two great and sublime Victims for sin, Jesus and Mary His Mother.

The "Consecrated" remain among the penitents, to be, by their submission, their diligence in work, their cheerful fulfilment of the rule, living models to their companions. Virtue is never so attractive as when seen to be a living reality in our fellow beings; example stirs us to emulation, and we try to keep pace with those we admire. Among school children a good child has often more influence than a good master. The part assigned by Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia to the consecrated among the penitents, was based on her enlightened knowledge of the human heart.

But the consecrated are simply more perfect penitents, and her rules for penitents are full of wisdom equally remarkable.

Upon entering the house the penitent is given a paper to sign containing a list of all the under-linen and other things she may have brought with her. She then lays aside the vanities of the world for the simple, modest uniform worn in the class. She regards her mistresses as representing our Lord in His care for her conversion. Her days are spent in working with her companions. She is also instructed in her religion. At recreation, in the refectory, in

the class-room, she learns habits of modesty and charity. She calls her companions "Sister," her mistresses "Mother." She is daily present at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and sanctifies her days with prayers to our Lord and His Mother. She says her beads and the Litanies. Certain hours are spent in silence in penance for past disorders, and to share with the religious the work of expiation for the sins of the whole world. But she is forbidden to undertake any penances, not marked in the rule, except by permission. She goes to confession once a fortnight, and is carefully instructed about the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist. While at their work, the penitents sing hymns; at their meals, the lives of the Saints, or other spiritual works, are read to them; at recreation they are taught to behave decorously, without riotous mirth, and to exercise mutual charity.

This rule, binding alike on Consecrated and penitents, is so thoroughly adapted to the purpose, that it prepares the best subjects to become Magdalens, and herein lay Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's reward for her labours among her beloved penitents. She found among them many souls capable of great generosity.

But from time to time trials came from the most unexpected quarters. There were cases of strange revival of temptation in penitents, as if the devil put forth his strength in revenge for former defeats. A case of the kind was one of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's trials in 1851. One of the Consecrated,

whose life had been, for eleven years, an example of mortification; who had voluntarily slept on a board, worn a hair shirt, and been a model to her companions, became gradually lukewarm, and at last so fell away that she declared her intention of returning to her former dissolute life. Entreaties and remonstrance were of no avail, and at length, yielding to her wishes, the Mother deprived her of the uniform of the Consecrated. The devil apparently had won the victory over this poor soul, who, before coming to the Good Shepherd, had been enslaved by great vices. But his triumph did not last long. Remorse followed in a few days, and the poor child, moved by the grace of God, confessed that she was most unhappy, and asked to be readmitted among the Consecrated. She persevered, and Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, who carefully followed God's dealings with her soul, allowed her, in the course of time, to resume her dress as one of the Consecrated. This second act of consecration was the beginning of an exemplary life. Falling into ill-health, the poor girl bore great suffering with angelic patience, and died, leaving behind her, among her companions, the reputation of a soul predestined to glory.

The Mother Foundress' influence over the penitents was nothing short of marvellous. Her mere look, her words, had some irresistible power in them which took happy effect on the most rebellious and the most thoughtless. She loved souls, and hence had a facility for doing them good. If she knew that one of her

beloved penitents was inclined to go wrong, she managed to meet her, as if by chance, perhaps in the penitents' courtyard, very early some morning, the Mistress arranging that the penitent should be there at the same time. She would then address her very affectionately, in words such as God alone can suggest to a Mother's tenderness, and which hardly ever failed to effect a change in the right direction.

One day she accidentally came across the Mistress, good Mother St. Vincent, with a young penitent who had long met every warning, every entreaty, with open resistance, until at last no one knew what to do with her. "See, Mother," said Mother Mary of St. Vincent, "this is a very naughty girl; nothing will make her listen to reason. What is to be done with her?"

Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia walked up to the girl, made the sign of the cross on her forehead, and said to her very gently, "What, my poor child! Why grieve me thus who thought you were so good; you are not going to make me so unhappy, I know. Oh no! I know you will not. I am sure next time I come I shall have nothing but praise to give you." Touched by such kindness, by this maternal solicitude, the girl went straight back to the class and to her work, and there was an end of her bad behaviour. From that day a change began, and there was never the least occasion to reprove her again. A few years later she died a holy death.

This little story was told by an old consecrated

penitent, among many others, all much alike, showing Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's power over hearts.

"When she used to come among us to talk to us," says the same person, "we were all transformed—as it were, compelled into doing our best. And this was not a passing impression; it bore lasting fruits. Many of us owed our perseverance to it. Our Mother used to speak to us with exquisite delicacy; she never said a word that wounded or humiliated. On the contrary, she was always trying to raise us up, to quicken within us self-respect and trust in God, always repeating the assurance that we were very dear to her. 'You are my own good dear penitents,' she would say; 'and how can such a title ever offend you? Am not I the first of penitents? I have offended my God' (this she said with intense humility); 'I ought, then, to do penance.'

"Our Mother had also a most remarkable knowledge of souls. How often did not one penitent or another, beseech her to let them go back to the world, renewing the request again and again, and our Mother would not consent, but would warn her very kindly, yet firmly, that her salvation depended on her staying, and that outside she would be sure to lose her soul eternally. And she was always right, as those who were faithful to her warnings found. Some died happily in the fold; some are here still, consecrating all the days of their life to the Lord.

"At other times, on the contrary, our good Mother would just cast one of her penetrating glances on some

girl who wanted to go out, and then turn and say to the Mistress, 'Let her go at once, Sister. She will do more harm than good among the others.'

"The thing that was most remarkable in Mother Pelletier's character was her inexhaustible kindness, her tender compassion for all the spiritual and corporal needs of her dear penitents. To get them any pleasure or little comfort was her greatest happiness. She could not bear to hear anything against any one, and sometimes when our good Mother St. Vincent tried to insinuate some mild complaints, borne out by the irregularities that had occurred, our good Mother would look at her beseechingly, put her finger on her lip, then turn to the penitents and say, 'I am sure, dear children, you will never do that again? Yes! I know you will promise me; let us hear no more about it. It is all forgiven now, and you will not make your Mother St. Vincent unhappy again, nor grieve me who love you so dearly.'"

CHAPTER XII

EGYPT—FINAL JUDGMENTS OF ROME

1845

Work in Egypt—Mgr. Guasco—Letter from Cardinal Patrizi—Mother Pelletier's joy—M. Joubert—Mgr. de Hercé—Death to self—Re-election—Convent at St. Omer.

WHEN, in 1845, Mgr. Guasco's appeal for a foundation in Cairo (his episcopal residence) reached Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, it suggested to her no new idea. The possibility of founding missions in Africa to redeem negro slaves had long been familiar to her. The work, to her mind, was the extension of our Lord's Redemption to a country shamefully neglected, or rather degraded and oppressed by the wickedness of men.

With every resource of her fertile and inventive genius she therefore set to work to carry out the Bishop's plan. To enlist public sympathy she issued a circular to her religious, suggesting that persons who wished to have a little slave redeemed in their name, or a forsaken child educated, should send contributions of from twenty-five to thirty francs. This appeal proved very successful. The Piedmontese Amba-

sador in Paris congratulated her upon it ; not a few charitable people sent alms of more or less amount, and, on the feast of Pentecost, the Rev. Canon Fouré preached a sermon in favour of the work, which enlisted the sympathies of many of his hearers. Meanwhile, all who saw the little negro-girls at Angers (sent from Cairo by M. Olivieri, the Priest who had bought and freed them) were also interested in it, by the simple piety of the little blacks.

One of the most ardent wishes of Mother Pelletier's apostolic zeal was thus realised. In 1843 she had addressed the following touching allocution to her Community :—

“On our way to Rome, my dear daughters, as we were climbing up a hill one day we were obliged to get out of the stage-coach to lighten the load for the horses. We met a little shepherd who was keeping his flock, and, in the flock, were white sheep and black, so I said to myself, ‘Oh, little shepherd, how happy you are to have white and black sheep! I have indeed white ones, but no black.’ Now, my dear daughters, the black sheep I have longed for, for so many years, are the poor negro-girls, stolen by cruel hands from their parents, or sometimes sold by those very parents themselves, for a trifle. Hard-hearted merchants carry those poor little creatures away to Cairo or Alexandria, or to some other place, and expose them in the markets, to be sold to whomever will give most for them. It very often happens too, that some of the children

fall ill or are not strong enough to keep up with the rest on the march, and in that case they are left in some wood or ravine, and there die or become the prey of wild beasts.

“Oh! how often we used to hear about the hateful traffic of the slave trade in our native island (Noirmoutier). How often we used to be told the most piteous tales of heartrending scenes; when the poor negroes were piled up, one on top of the other, with scarcely food enough given them to keep them alive. And when they committed the smallest fault, their pitiless masters had them beaten with rattans. These stories used to break my heart; and what a joy for all of us to be able to take part in breaking the double chain of these poor creatures. We shall have the happiness, I hope, of saving at least a few.” The Genoese priest, M. Olivieri, writes to us that he will soon be here; and that his servant, old Ninia, who has had charge of the little blacks during the voyage, will bring them to Angers. Oh, what care of them we shall take! what attention shall we not pay to their instruction! My soul is thrilled with joy by the thought that here, Ethiopians, Nubians, Abyssinians will receive the white robe of Baptism—and who knows whether, in days to come, the Good Shepherd shall not plant its tent on the banks of the Nile among these uncivilised tribes? Ah! my daughters, how beautiful will be that day of joy when the waters of regeneration shall be poured on the foreheads of the negro children under our care—what a consolation

for us when those souls shall begin to open their eyes to the truths of faith! We shall be participating in the joy of heaven and of the Church, that Mother whose happiness it is to see the numbers of her children increased. See her tenderness for all who come to her; with what kindness she welcomes Pagans when they throw themselves into her arms. Some Japanese arrived in Rome lately, and the Pope would not allow even a Cardinal to baptize them. He did it himself. How happy we are to be in the bosom of the Church, and to be there for ever. Let us never cease thanking God for so great a grace."

It was in these same early months of 1845, that judgment was to be given at Rome upon the painful controversies caused by Mgr. Angebault's objection to the Constitutions of the Good Shepherd. Relations between the diocesan authority and the Community had become more and more strained, the Bishop pressing the Sisters of the Council to support his views in their letters to Rome, while he refrained as much as possible from direct communication with the Superior herself. The situation was scarcely tolerable, and Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia had to undergo a perpetual martyrdom. The following is an extract from a letter to the Superior at Poitiers, in whom she placed much confidence:—

"How grateful I am, my beloved daughter, for your sympathy with my troubles. They have indeed been great. Every day some new grief crushes us—I feel it all so keenly that I cannot even speak of it.

Ah! if God did not support me, faith itself would be in danger."

She had suffered, without intermission, three whole years, in defending, against her Bishop, the Constitutions of which she was the appointed guardian. The struggle had, however, been forced upon her; for, as a submissive daughter of the Church, her only desire was to work in perfect obedience. But at length the Roman Congregations gave judgment. Upon the 12th May 1845, Cardinal Patrizi wrote to her: "No change will be made in aught that concerns the powers of the Superior-General or the Cardinal Protector's authority."

A great weight was lifted from the Mother's heart. "You must join with us in singing the mercies of the Lord," she wrote; "all our affairs at Rome are terminated, and that most happily. We shall write to you immediately."

The Cardinal's letter was for her the dawn of an era of happiness, the calm after the storm. Besides the good news it contained, the tone of respect for the Constitutions which pervaded it affected her deeply. The Cardinal appeared, in common with herself, to feel that the germ, the hopes for the future life of the Good Shepherd, were contained in them. She had the decree printed, and a copy of it was carried in procession, while the Community chanted the *Te Deum*. It was to her the table of the law for the Community. The following is the letter Cardinal Patrizi addressed to her:—

"May 12th, 1845.

"VERY REVEREND MOTHER,—The Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars has at length given judgment, at the petition of his Lordship the Bishop, with regard to the Institute of the Good Shepherd. His Holiness, by His Apostolic authority and of His goodness, has deigned to confirm the decision of the Sacred Congregation. I think his Lordship the Bishop has probably already communicated to you the decision of the Most Eminent Prefect of the Congregation, which has been sent to him; but still I think it my duty to make you acquainted with it, in order that it may serve you as the rule applicable to all previous decisions concerning the Constitutions of the Institute.

"It has, then, been decided that there shall be no innovation made, respecting the office of the General or Superior, or the authority of the Cardinal Protector. Article 5, of Constitution 32, only, is to be changed, and the rights of delegating confidential persons reserved to the Ordinary. Finally, Constitution 33 is to be omitted. Confessors are to be appointed by the Ordinary, according to the prescriptions of the Council of Trent and the Apostolic Constitutions.

"It remains only for me to say that I am sure, as regards yourself, you will always see to the exact observance of the decision of the Sacred Congregation, which, as I have already said, has been confirmed by His Holiness. I must not omit to add that if, to give greater authority to this decision, it were

thought good to have it formulated as a decree, this could be easily obtained.

“Pray always for me, and make others pray for me, who implore with all my heart the fullest and choicest blessings of Heaven upon you and upon all your religious.—Very affectionately yours in our Lord,

“C. CARDINAL PATRIZI.

“*P.S.*—In answer to your last, received by to-day’s post, I will write as soon as possible. Meanwhile I exhort you to be quiet and await from God and from time what you desire for the good of the Institute.”

When made aware of the decision of the Sacred Congregation, Mgr. Angebault appointed M. Joubert, one of his Vicars-General, to be Superior of the Community; a Priest of eminent practical sense, who had always taken a great interest in the Good Shepherd. On June 1st, 1845, this clergyman, as representing the Bishop, was invested with all the powers the Rule and Constitutions assign to the local Superior.

The appointment gave much joy to the Community and relieved many anxious forebodings. The evil days, that were past, were now only remembered as a preparation for the days of peace that had dawned upon the Institute, and the good Mother, more happy than any one, expressed her gratitude to God by causing the *Te Deum* and the *Laudate* to be often sung.

The Good Shepherd could at last continue its work in peace, and began to send out bands in all directions like bees from a hive. In June two religious, one Scotch the other German, started for America, to go and help their Sisters at Louisville. At Munich the house was making wonderful progress. The King of Bavaria, visiting it unexpectedly one day, was astonished to find so many German nuns, and he congratulated himself upon having brought Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's daughters into the Bavarian capital. At Angers the Mother was adding to the number of classes. In expectation of the arrival of more negro children she now formed a class for the little blacks already in the convent; it was separated from the other classes, and had its own mistress. It must have been interesting to see these children of the desert gathered into the nest providentially prepared for them in the heart of the Good Shepherd.

When more negro children arrived, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia availed herself of the occasion, as in former days, to invite Mgr. de Herc  to come and preside at a clothing, preach, and hear confessions in the three foreign languages he knew. The pious prelate, listening only to the dictates of affection, and wishing once more to see the Community where he had exercised a ministry so agreeable to his piety, looked forward to more happy days among his beloved daughters. But, before accepting the invitation, he thought it right to obtain Mgr. Angebault's consent, which the latter (who had never altogether liked the

connection between his revered colleague and the Good Shepherd) refused.

The following touching letter to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia from Mgr. de Herc  was written to help her to bear this new cross with resignation :—

“NANTES, *July 10th*, 1845.

“MADAME THE SUPERIOR-GENERAL, — Your holy Bishop has seen and read the letter addressed to me by Sister Mary of the Nativity, and answers me this morning, that the arrival of the young negresses should make no change in the conduct which I have adopted in my ‘*great prudence*.’ You will understand, therefore, that I must refrain from offering them my ministrations, as I can only work in the diocese of another Bishop, by his own invitation. What, indeed, would be the value of services, performed in a Community, by one not called by the Superior? Should I not be committing a fault? Should I not, under the semblance of apostolic work, be dishonouring, to some extent, the true Shepherd of the holy house? Five years ago, when first, my good Mother, you were so kind as to offer me the work, which it has been such a pleasure to me to do, I had the honour of telling you that I could only undertake it at your Bishop’s request. Mgr. Paysant most kindly invited me himself, and I gladly responded to his and your confidence. But now, my good Mother, your present holy Bishop does not see that my presence will be of any use to your foreign inmates, and he thinks it lessens him in

the esteem of his people. At the same time he expresses the greatest respect, the truest friendship for me, and for that reason I am all the more reluctant to thrust a thorn into his heart. Your own heart, good Mother, expresses to me feelings of disappointment so affecting that naught else but a sense of duty could hinder my coming. I had intended to start in the beginning of August on a journey from which I expected so much pleasure, but such was not God's will.

"The most pleasant days of my episcopate are those spent within the precincts of your pious enclosure, and I congratulated myself on being able to put to some use my love for foreign languages. There was, perhaps, in this some spiritual self-indulgence, some self-love. I must overcome myself in this enjoyment; it was perhaps too sweet.

"But, while I regret the privation on my own account, I comfort myself by thinking that you have other ecclesiastics at hand, who are skilled in the three languages, so you do not really want me. I shall always remain united, my good Mother, with you, and with all your pious daughters, of whatever class, and I count on your good prayers, and shall ever rejoice to wander in spirit through the chapel and classes of the Good Shepherd.

"Accept, dear Rev. Mother, my thanks for all the kindnesses you have so often heaped upon me in days, always too short to please me. I shall not cease to pray for you, for your preservation, and for the

holy Community which I shall always cherish most sincerely.

“Please offer my respects to Mme. d’Andigné, and my most affectionate regards to all who have the happiness of living under the guidance of your pastoral staff.

“Accept the offering of an attachment which will never alter, and of the respect with which I am, Madame the Superior-General, your devoted servant and friend,



FRANCIS,

Bishop of Nantes.”

However much Mgr. de Hercé might feel being cut off from the Good Shepherd, it was a still greater sacrifice to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia to be debarred from seeing the holy Bishop, under whose fostering care her mission-work had begun, and upon whose counsel she depended. She continued, however, to keep him informed of all that took place at the Good Shepherd, and sought his advice in all difficulties. Two years later, being at Rome, he told Pius IX. of the painful and delicate situation into which he had been put with regard to the Good Shepherd, and wrote to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, “The Holy Father is of opinion that, when a foreigner asks for my aid, either for confession, or to receive her vows in her native language, I should not hesitate about the matter when informed of her wishes through you, Madame the Superior-General; but, save in such cases, he gave me to understand that I ought to

decline, so as not to embitter the misunderstanding existing between your Bishop and your pious Community."

To be cut off from her friends, especially from one like Mgr. de Herc , to whom she looked for advice, probably cost Mother Pelletier more than it might others, for she was naturally very affectionate. But she had learned to rely upon God alone, and to see His Divine Will in every event. She had further schooled herself to renounce mere personal gratification, and constantly practised the mortification of self in the voluntary acceptance of the crosses laid upon her by the will of God. The following words are gathered together from an instruction she gave to her daughter on "Death to self":—

"All Israel is now in peace; and if trouble come, it will be caused by those among us who are not dead to self. This might even prove some day the ruin of our Congregation, or at any rate a bar to its progress. There can be no manner of doubt, my dear daughters, that those whose life is self-indulgent and too sensual, have not God's work at heart, and leave it to wither, or die, rather than contribute to its development. For, as St. John Climacus says, it is not possible to keep our eyes raised to heaven and fixed on earth at the same time, and it is therefore plain that one too much attached to earth, cannot possibly love heavenly things. Nor can a soul, that seeks self-gratification, be zealous in labouring for God's glory and for the salvation of men. We must therefore

rid ourselves of all this self-love, this love of earthly things, that we may be able to lift up our souls to God and the things that are His. Great works demand perfect detachment from self. We should set ourselves valiantly to work to acquire this virtue, which is indispensable if we would overcome our natural inclinations and repugnances. We must love all things humble, all things that humble us, that mortify and kill in us our self-love: this is hard for our poor human nature, a bitter sacrifice to us.

“It would be a sign that you were still leading a worldly life, if you preferred one charge to another, one house to another, one person to another, or if you attached importance to the little trifles which torment souls entangled in such miseries, and hamper their free flight towards the Lord. The Saints knew what this death to self is—no feeling of repugnance hindered them on their way; they were never heard to say, ‘I am not capable of such sacrifices. . . . It would cost me too much to fill this post or that. . . . It is impossible for me to leave this house and go to any other.’ There must be no religious in the Congregation so imperfect as to have any such miserable attachments as these to her own likings.

“Reflect well, my dear daughters, of the consolations, the sweet interior joys, which God sends to those generous souls who seek Him alone.”

In the early part of 1845, either because the decision come to at Rome was as yet unknown, or, if known, to avoid making a parade of the victory

won in the Roman Courts, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia for the sake of her Community was more heedful than was her wont to keep her own counsel.

On the 4th May Mgr. Regnier, Bishop of Angoulême, wrote to her as follows:—

“I have just received your letter, my dear daughter, and wish to let you know that the dispositions you express greatly comfort me. God be praised that you so thoroughly understand and feel the necessity, the sacred duty of saving your Institute at the cost of no matter what sacrifices. Let there be utter self-abnegation in your present grave circumstances. Neither write nor say anything that is not in the strictest accordance with perfect candour and strict religious obedience. Further, take courage and offer to God your sorely wounded heart.”

Such a letter as this from a Bishop so thoroughly conversant with the affairs of the Institute as Mgr. Regnier, was a great encouragement to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia.

Her lively faith always fastened on every supernatural motive of encouragement, and the effect of such a letter, from a prelate acquainted with the affairs of the Good Shepherd, was to stimulate her to attempt greater things for the good of souls.

She was further sustained by the knowledge of the good work her Order was doing.

Fathers Rossillo and Ringot preached the Magdalens' Retreat, and were so edified that they told

her that a house, in which so much good was done, could not fall. Father Studer, S.J., Superior of the Residence at Angers, was wont to repeat to her these words of encouragement—

“The bark of the Jesuits, and that of the Good Shepherd, have Jesus Christ and the All-Holy Virgin for pilots. Can they be wrecked by waves and billows? By no means. There may now and then spring a leak, but foundered they cannot. The pilots are too experienced, and can but steer us into the haven of a blissful eternity.”

Mother Pelletier used to place herself and her Community under St. Ignatius' patronage upon his feast, the day on which she first began her work; and this year she celebrated it with a profession, M. Joubert, the new Superior, presiding. The ceremony was scarcely finished, when Mgr. Reynolds, the Bishop of Charleston in America, arrived at the Good Shepherd. He gave the holy habit to thirteen postulants and preached in English. His accounts of his apostolic labours, and of the neglected condition of the numerous negro population in his diocese, made a lively impression on Mother Pelletier. The bare mention of souls neglected, inflamed her heart with Divine charity, and set her mind at work to devise methods of helping those whom already she looked upon as the future sheep of her flock.

A few weeks later she was greatly rejoiced. Mgr. Angebault, who, during the procession on the Assumption, had been impressed by the devout demeanour

of the children of the Good Shepherd, sent them, as a pious souvenir of his visit, a statue of the Blessed Virgin in the Temple. This gracious act was the more gratifying to the Mother, as she had often felt hurt at so seldom receiving any tokens of his favour, for in vindicating the rights of her Institute against those she was ever most anxious to please, she had always done violence to her natural dispositions.

Soon after the Assumption, the local Superiors of the several Communities began to meet at Angers for the election of a Superior-General; they were eighteen in number, and their arrival gave pleasure to the whole Community, the Mother availing herself of this opportunity to question her daughters with maternal interest about the difficulties of their respective Houses, their special works, and their methods of conducting these latter.

On the 26th August the ballot was opened, M. Joubert acting as Superior, assisted by the senior Chaplain, M. Benoit. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia was re-elected. Her first words to her daughters were to exhort them to charity and obedience to their superiors—

“The spirit of charity and concord should characterise us and animate our every action, together with the most perfect submission to their Lordships the Bishops.”

She then appointed her assistants, retaining Mother Mary St. Chantal de Jésus as First Assistant, and appointing Mother Mary St. Euphrasia of Jesus de

Pechmann, Superior at Turin, as Second; and wrote to the latter in the following terms:—

"September 2nd, 1845.

"'Lord, teach me to do Thy will.'

"My good beloved daughter and assistant, God having deprived me of our most virtuous Sister, Mary Teresa of Jesus, has had pity on my tears and my grief. He has chosen you, my dearest daughter, to take her place. You are named Second Assistant and First Mistress of novices. Yours is the most beautiful, the holiest of missions. I shall rely upon you for whatever concerns Germany, Piedmont, and France.

"Come, my dearest daughter, if (as I hope may be the case) your illustrious Founder does not oppose it. He is so good! so pious! Give him my respects, and tell him we promise to send him any Superior he may think best, and you will help us to make the choice. Our worthy Father Superior, who is a model of virtue and prudence, hopes you will lose no time in coming.

"Our virtuous Sister Mary of St. Germain will kindly act as Superior when you leave. I have great confidence in that much-loved daughter, and I love and bless her, as also our dear little Sister Mary of St. Radegunda, who will, I think, help her in every way.

"May our Lord bless all our beloved children abundantly.

"I impatiently await your coming, and am, in union with the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, your much attached
 MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA."

Her re-election drew from Mgr. de Herc  a very touching letter addressed to the Sisters of the Council—

"It is with my whole heart that I share your joy at the good Mother-General's re-election. She founded this beautiful work, she has spread it over the world, and it is meet that she, who has scattered broadcast this source of so much good, should ever remain its Superior-General. May the Lord lengthen out her days beyond the ordinary span of life, that she may bring her immense work to perfection, and extend it farther and farther still.

"I beg of you, my good Sisters, to offer my respects and congratulations to the good Mother-General, for whom I feel an attachment and reverence that can know no change. But it is you, my good Mothers, rather than her, whom I congratulate upon her continuing to be Superior. It would have been a terrible misfortune for the whole Congregation to have been deprived of such a head—so skilful, so prudent, so filled with the Spirit of God.

"It is very painful to me, dear Sisters, not to go and rejoice together with you over this providential event. I am very glad you have such an excellent Superior as good M. Joubert. When he thinks that my presence will be of use to any of your foreign

inmates, he will make his report to Monseigneur, and beg him to invite me to come, as in past days, to comfort, exhort, and converse with all the dear children who have come from distant lands, and I shall not wait to be asked twice. If God grant me the grace to spend a day with you, it will be for me a holiday. Please tell your good Mother-General so, and all your pious companions, and recommend me to their prayers. I also claim yours, and I am, with most respectful affection, in the Most Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, my good Mothers, and dear Sisters, your most humble servant and very devoted friend,

✠ J. FRANCIS,
Bishop of Nantes."

The sadness of parting succeeded the joy of meeting. All through September the series of farewells was lengthened out as the religious returned to the foundations. "Oh, joyous days! oh, happy time!" they were often to exclaim in after years.

In September, at the outset of her renewed government, Mother Pelletier had to make a sacrifice, the suppression of one of her houses. The Community in the Rue Plumet at Paris was in a moribund state, owing to the lack of support, and Mgr. Affre wanted only one convent of the Good Shepherd in his diocese. Under these circumstances Mother Pelletier took the sensible course of assembling her Council to decide upon its suppression. By transferring the penitents of this House to other houses of the Order, she

secured their spiritual welfare ; and the debts, which amounted to 6000 francs, she took upon herself. Before the closing of this house she had the consolation of hearing of the abjuration and baptism therein of an English Protestant lady. This proof of the Divine mercy helped greatly to temper the bitterness of her sacrifice. The Mother Prioress thus announced this good news to her: "Yesterday, the feast of the Sacred Heart, the Lord prepared for us a great day. A young English lady, who has been staying in our house for the last two months, received Holy Baptism, made her abjuration and first Communion. Nothing could have been more touching: there was never a more glorious day. All the ceremonies were carried out with perfect order, as if angels had organised them. It was M. Boni, M. Ramon's substitute, who brought about this conversion. He was delighted, and so were all the Community. We could not keep silence; there were outbursts of joy and of thanksgiving everywhere. God has indeed greatly consoled us. All our troubles seemed mere trifles, and that the only thing needed for success was to trust in God and have an ardent desire to please Him. You must help us to thank God. The conversion was the first miracle we had ever seen. In one fortnight, grace wrought wonders in that soul. No personal influence was at work. She embraced our holy religion with lively faith and great piety. The young lady herself wondered at feeling so brave, but she followed the attraction of grace, and now is a daughter of our Mother, the Holy Church."

While closing the house in Paris, Mother Pelletier was opening another at St. Omer, in the diocese of Arras. The Cardinal Bishop de la Tour d'Auvergne had asked for the foundation, and a house had been bought for the purpose by Count du Tertre, a generous Christian. He put the work, at first, into the hands of Sisters of St. Vincent of Paul, who welcomed the daughters of Mme. Pelletier as Sisters, as soon as they arrived.

Other generous people, the Givenchy family, M. de Colbert, Mlle. Papegay spared no pains in trying to bring friends and patrons to rally round the work, and before long Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia saw the hopes the Bishop had conceived realised. He had written to her once, "I shall receive the worthy daughters of your Institute with feelings of deep consolation. Formed under your auspices, blessed by a Mother so capable, they will shed abroad in my diocese an odour of sanctity which will produce the happiest fruits of conversion."

The house at St. Omer is one of the most successful in the whole Institute.

CHAPTER XIII

EL BIAR—IMOLA

1843-1845

Foundation at El Biar—Mother de Stransky—Imola—Mother Pelletier—Cardinal Mastai—His admiration of the Good Shepherd.

A TRAVELLER visiting Algeria in 1867, while famine desolated our beauteous dependencies, showing to the astonished gaze of Europe what Christian charity could achieve, might often have witnessed at the gates of Algiers, on the Abu Zaréa Road, the affecting sight of Muslim women and girls, driven by hunger from the mountains of Kabylia, gathered together at the entrance of a humble dwelling, standing in large grounds, where order, peace, and well-regulated arrangements reigned in striking contrast with the neighbouring Moorish dwellings. The Arab is incapable of order; here, on the contrary, everything is in its place. Even in the gardens the orange and palm trees are greener and better watered than elsewhere, and here dwell the daughters of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia. For the last two and twenty years they have been enlarging and arranging their house, now embowered in gardens. Here have hun-

dreds of poor Kabylian women been housed, instructed, and baptized.

The foundation at El Biar proved the foresight of Mother St. Euphrasia and the obedience of her daughters. In 1845 Mgr. Dupuch, fearing for the safety of the Community in a convent which, standing outside the town-walls, was exposed to the attacks of robbers and even of wild beasts, wished the Sisters to move to a house he had bought in the town. He had, however, paid so large a price for it, that Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, refused her signature to the contract of purchase. This proved fortunate, for in the very next year the Bishop was obliged to leave his diocese, on account of his heavy debts, and, had she signed the deed, the Community would have been responsible for sums largely in excess of their means.

The local Superior, Mother Mary of St. Philomena de Stransky (a religious who had sacrificed to her vocation the advantages belonging to distinction of birth and education), had faithfully carried out Mother-General's instructions in every particular. She was, therefore, glad that she had not moved from El Biar, which she enlarged and improved. There are now 300 young women in the bright, pleasant home into which the house has been transformed.

Mgr. Dupuch's successor, Mgr. Pavy, lavished kind attentions on the convent, and with thoughtful delicacy of feeling appointed M. Suchet Superior, a connection which seemed to the Community to bring them into

nearer communion with their Mother-General, from the fact of M. Suchet having been her confessor at Tours.

Everything prospered at El Biar. Even the garrison lent a helping hand to the construction and organisation, for the military authorities supplied soldier workmen at low wages and under strict discipline; General Duchesne, in particular, obtained the use of military waggons for the conveyance of workmen and the transport of building materials.

In self-sacrifice soldiers and religious meet on common ground. Both are found on the battlefield. In times of peace one naturally helps the other for the relief of settlements made in conquered lands.

Mother de Stransky's letters to her mother at Munich give a vivid picture of a Good Shepherd colony among the Arabs, a picture filled in with tender touches, but mainly showing the religious submission of a soul utterly submissive to the will of God, and hence ready to go wherever Superiors may direct. We can follow in them the gradual growth of the foundation, the first steps taken to form a flock, as, one by one, sheep come to the fold. We see how supernaturally everything is done: the purity of vision with which this daughter of Mother Pelletier first discerns the Divine Will and then interprets it; the compassion of heart wherewith she relieves every misery that crosses her path; the industry with which she enlarges her house, makes it habitable, and then fills it with young girls gathered into it by charity;

the care with which every new penitent is surrounded as if each were a newly-recovered treasure.

On the 4th June 1843 she wrote as follows :—

“MY DEAR GOOD MOTHER,—So far as I can remember I left off my last letter just when I was telling you of our three first penitents, and I now return to the same subject. It is one so close to my heart that it will fill most of my letters, and, I trust, prove consoling. How grateful I am to God for having, in His merciful love, appointed for me so vast a field of labour. I should never have supposed that there would be so much good to be done here ; it would not be easy to find another town where the necessity was so urgent. Great interest also is taken in our Institute. The clergy, who seem to be really animated with apostolic zeal, have had such sad experiences that they recognise the importance of our mission. Among erring souls there must always have been some who, touched by grace, would gladly have found a home where they might lead better lives ; but who, finding none and having no means of subsistence except vice, have returned in despair to the tyranny of wicked spirits. Whenever it was practicable the Priests sent such cases to France to save them from the fearful snares spread for them here ; but often, even in their own country, they did not know where to find shelter, and then what was to become of them ?

“There is such frightful immorality here that in

the hospitals may be found children of eleven and twelve suffering from horrible diseases brought on by vicious life. Who would not be made unhappy by such a sight? Amid such miseries and seeing them close at hand, one cannot but be horror-struck at such corruption, and feel ready for any sacrifice, however great. But the world pays no heed to things such as these. Just think of all the difficulties our Mother House had to meet in founding these Institutions, and yet, rightly understood, they are of the greatest advantage to mankind! It was even objected that converting sinners was not woman's work; but the very people who spoke thus to us have learnt better by experience, and are now our friends and benefactors.

"The holy Founder of our Order, our good Father Eudes, made wonderful conversions as a Priest, both in the pulpit and in the confessional, and just because he saw that, through his ministry, numbers of women leading lives of sin, were converted and brought back to the path of virtue, he felt the imperative necessity of providing refuges for such persons, and, under this Divine inspiration, founded our Institute.

"Many of these poor creatures have fallen most grievously, and of course it is the office of the Priest to reconcile them to God; it is the Priest who is to bring them back into the right path. But how hard it must be for them not to fall back into bad ways if they are left exposed to the old occasions of sin?

Just after conversion they are still weak in withstanding temptation. We do not interfere with what belongs exclusively to the Priest; all we attempt is to continue and maintain the work God has begun by His ministers.

“Then there are other poor creatures still unconverted, who have not courage to confess all their sins to a Priest, and who are in such straits from poverty that they are glad to find a home where kindly hearts and arms are ready with a welcome. No sooner are they admitted than the desire for the old bad life often re-awakens; they would like to return to their poverty for the sake of getting back to the world, where temptations will beset them. But, once among us, a feeling of new-born affection, a sense of security, the sheltering influence of a home where their wants are provided for, have a withholding effect; and, taking advantage of all these feelings, we choose our time to set forth to them the beauty of virtue, the joys to which it leads, contrasted with the horrors of a sinful life. These are the kind of means by which we prepare their hearts for the entrance of grace. After a time fear and repentance begin their work. The desire for confession is expressed, and the heart, with all its infirmities, is laid bare before the minister of God, who alone has power to reconcile the soul to Him and to restore peace of conscience.

“This hope, grounded on repeated experiences, and not on mere vague ideas of our own, is our reason for founding houses in all places to which want and

misery call us. We have founded one here, and I hope our confidence will not be deceived. The beginning has been successful, as my last letter showed you. We had then already five penitents; two more have come since, and by the next steamboat (on the 6th) we expect a girl of between seventeen and eighteen, who for the last two years has been the disgrace of Constantine and the neighbourhood.

“The penitents we have are already a source of consolation to us, and assure us that they have never in their lives been so happy as now. Two of them—one sixteen, the other eighteen—talk of some day becoming Magdalens. The elder is an officer’s daughter; she has been accustomed to have coffee seven or eight times a day, and to bestow the utmost care on her person; but she often edifies us very much. During the month of May she several times expressed the wish to sacrifice her beautiful hair to our Blessed Lady. The Mistress prevented her, telling her to wait a little while longer; but the other morning, during the great silence, she was found with her long black hair cut off and lying by her side. This sacrifice greatly touched us. She owned it had been a hard struggle, but that she had done it because her hair was a great occasion of vanity to her, and that she had sometimes taken up two persons’ time more than once a day in dressing it.”

Penetrated by Father Eudes’ spirit and that of Mother Pelletier, Mother de Stransky’s apostolic

ardour was hidden beneath a reserved exterior. Of angelic piety from her earliest years, self-sacrifice in its more heroic forms had always attracted her. The mission of the Good Shepherd, the main object of whose labours is the conversion and sanctification of souls, was more to her mind than that of the Congregations devoted to the service of the sick and destitute, than that even of the Orders who sing the Divine praises and are wholly given up to prayer. To feel that she worked for souls sweetened to her all the austerities of her vocation. For this, the Apostolic Mission of the Good Shepherd, her soul had longed, as we shall see in the following letter, written about a year after she left Bavaria, and only a few days before her profession. It is addressed to her mother, the Baroness (Christine) de Stransky (by birth a member of the De Schleick family), who had bestowed the utmost care on her daughter's education. It reveals the true daughter of Mother Pelletier, fired with burning zeal:—

“ ‘Behold the bridegroom cometh ! go forth to meet Him.’

“ These words seem to sound louder and louder to my ears. Every day brings their fulfilment nearer ; and, as if I could no longer bear waiting, I should like to rise up so soon as I hear them within me, and go out of myself and of the world, to go forth and see if the Lord be not yet coming, if He be not already come.

“ Whenever I think of that happy day, I feel my

heart beating so loud and so joyously that in vain should I attempt to give you an idea of it. I only wish I felt it still more, because then the time would be still nearer. Others might deem that all this is exaggeration, but the good God has spoken to you so often in your life that you will understand and share this great joy of mine. And if the mere expectation is so enchanting, what will the reality be? Yes! I am persuaded that then I shall be able to take heaven by storm, and to wrest from it all the spiritual graces I most need. All that I have long since been asking for, will be granted to me if there be within me even a spark of faith. My joy is always increasing. With regard to whatever may be decided for me, I leave it wholly in our Lord's hands, and have no desire nor choice left, save that nothing but God's own good pleasure be done.

"Oh, may I faithfully keep my vows! In every one of them there is for me a whole heaven, and particularly in the fourth, which contains the very essence of our Institute, the whole aim of our activity. Happy they who, like St. Francis Xavier, are called to seek and save lost sheep in distant lands! Happy they who labour in their own countries for the salvation of the stray sheep of the house of Israel! Happy they who, in the Mother House, may yet a little longer gather the good seed to scatter it among others."

All the time Mother de Stransky remained Superioress of the convent at El Biar, she kept up a most active correspondence with the Mother-General,

referring constantly to her for advice, and keeping her informed of everything she did in the government of the house and of the penitents.

She wrote on the 12th January 1844 :—

“HONOURED AND BELOVED MOTHER,—I keep up a continual communication in thought with your charity, of whom, though absent, I ask a thousand questions, seeking to read in your mother’s heart what you think, what you would like.

“I have written to you by almost every post to tell you everything, even things the least important, that happen in our African mission, and that you may, so far as possible, be able to read my very heart. I never tire of reading over and kissing the few dear words you write to me.”

Mother de Stransky’s administration, during the twenty years she was Superior at El Biar, was, in fact, based entirely upon the Foundress’ counsels. She looked upon her as the authoritative interpreter of the holy Will of God in regard to herself, and kept her informed of every event, of the slightest interest, occurring in the house, rejoicing when able to tell her of some fresh conquest of grace, the entrance or conversion of a penitent.

Here are a few out of the many stories which fill her letters to Mother-General :—

“Last Sunday, while we were at recreation, Father Suchet with us, and all joyfully keeping the name-

day of your Charity, we were told that a young lady, as pretty as she was modest-looking, wished to see us. She was, in fact, a charming young girl, only about seventeen, simple but very graceful. She asked if we received boarders, and when told we did she said, 'But not, I suppose, unless they can pay for their board?'—'No,' we answered, 'we have too many poor just now for that.' Then, in a sad, very gentle voice, 'I know a girl who is very poor and much to be pitied.' I asked the girl's age: 'She is seventeen,' she answered with a blush. 'She has behaved badly, but now wants to be converted. She is all alone and forsaken now.' We then told her that we had no room anywhere, except in the penitents' class, which was meant for cases such as this young girl's. We suspected she was talking of herself, but hardly dared propose that class to her. She answered immediately, 'She would gladly go anywhere you like; but she is very poor, she has nothing in the world, except the clothes she wears.' We told her we should receive such a case with maternal affection; and then she said, 'Well, it is myself.'"

Such letters as the above, bulletins from the battlefield, came from every convent of the Order, and Mother de Stransky, a true daughter of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, sent many like it, all expressing the same zeal and piety. Few have entered so fully as she did into the very spirit and zeal of the pious Founder. She drew to the Order her younger sister Caroline, who but passed through the Novitiate at

Angers, a model of every virtue, and then died at the age of twenty-one, the death of the elect. Mother Pelletier has left us some brief but edifying accounts of these two Sisters, a funeral oration, one might say, delivered at a spiritual conference of the Community.

While Mother de Stransky was gradually forming the Community at El Biar other foreign foundations were made by the Mother-General. Italian Catholics had been favourably impressed by the foundations of the Good Shepherd at Turin, Genoa, Rome; and at the time of her re-election, in August 1845, Mother Pelletier was busily engaged in negotiating for another at Imola. The Bishop, Cardinal Mastai, afterwards Pope Pius IX., made his first application for religious to the Superioress of the Good Shepherd in Rome, requesting her to forward it to Angers. Mother Pelletier sent a favourable answer, and the Bishop then wrote her the following letter:—

“IMOLA, *June 8th*, 1845.

“VERY REVEREND MOTHER,—I learn with much pleasure that you are disposed to entertain favourably my request to the Superior at Rome for a few Sisters of the Good Shepherd. I wish to place them in a retreat which I have already prepared for the reception of young women who have strayed from the right path, and whom I hope to bring back.

“I told the Superior that the religious would find the house fairly suitable, but that at present I am

constrained by hard necessity to restrict the number of Sisters to two, as I cannot afford to support more, and I shall confide twelve young women to their care. I further told her that I would give them a woman to do their errands and help with the housework, whose husband would do their messages in town. To your Reverence I also repeat that I foresee we shall be better off by-and-by, and that I shall then ask you for not only four, but for many more of your daughters to labour for souls. I remember I said to the Superior in Rome that, trusting in the Providence of God, even three Sisters might come; but I am afraid the third, though she would have all absolute necessities, might have to undergo some slight privations. Let me add that it were well that the religious should come in this month of June, that before receiving the girls above mentioned they might make all the house arrangements about furniture, linen, and the like.

“I can assure you of my fatherly care for those of your daughters you may send me, and I will do all I can to obtain for them any little comforts they may require; and I trust in God, who is the Great Shepherd of souls, to bestow these things upon them, and to deign to send down His blessing on our work.—I am, with the highest esteem and consideration, yours affectionately in Jesus Christ,

“✠ JEAN MARIE CARD. MASTAÏ, B.P.”

The 17th August 1845, the departure of the three

religious to found the house at Imola took place. At Genoa a fourth Sister was added to the number.

They shed many tears when leaving Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia; and she, feeling the separation as she did every such parting, wept too.

After a good passage the religious reached Imola on 3rd September. They were taken straight to the Bishop's palace and introduced to him. He received them with that benevolent smile which always made his greeting so attractive, and said, "Here are my Good Shepherd daughters, and they are welcome."

He then kindly asked about their journey and their Mother-General, noticed their religious habit, and said that the house he had taken for them would not suit, being without chapel or parlour, and that they must stay for the time in his own palace, where apartments, shut off from the rest of the house, were at their service. Here they were to stay until the convent chapel was ready and the enclosure grille fixed.

Every day they were present at the Cardinal's Mass in his private chapel, at which they received Holy Communion; there also, once a week, he heard their confessions, for no other Priest in Imola could speak French. The Sisters knew no Italian, but Mme. Argentina Guicioli, a lady who spoke both languages perfectly, gave them lessons at the Cardinal's request. Sometimes he acted as their teacher. They breakfasted and dined daily at his table, but supped in their own apartments. His Eminence often visited them at recreation, and they profited by such occasions to

talk to him of the Mother House and Generalat, of the many conversions at Angers and in other places, of the Magdalens, but most of all of their Mother-General, for whose zeal he had a great admiration. He used often to speak of her wonderful creative genius and of her apostolate, reaching over the world in spite of difficulties and tribulations of so many kinds. The following letter was written to her by His Eminence after the arrival of the Sisters :—

“IMOLA, *September 14th*, 1845.

“VERY REVEREND MOTHER-GENERAL,—Your Reverence has no doubt received from your daughters detailed news of their happy arrival at Imola ; but it is only right that you should hear of it from me too, and that I should at the same time express to you the consolation I feel in having acquired this little band of holy virgins, who will in a few days begin their mission of salvation and save many lost sheep, for I am certain that by God’s grace they will lead many back to the Fold of Jesus Christ, the Chief Shepherd ; and may the Lord of mercies be praised for it throughout eternity. I beg your Reverence also to receive the assurance of my profound gratitude.

“I have the consolation of having them by me here in my palace. I have great cause to thank the Lord, who holds the hearts of all men in His hands. It seems to me that those of your daughters He has placed in His own.

“I shall not fail to assist them in their needs, and

in this desire I have the happiness of assuring you that with the most profound esteem I am your very affectionate Servant,

“✠ JEAN MARIE, CARDINAL MASTAI,
Archbishop.”

Some few days after the religious arrived at Imola, the Cardinal received a letter from Angers. While reading it an expression of joy overspread his features, and then mounting to the upper floor, where the four Sisters were lodged, he showed it to them: it was the circular announcing to the whole Institute the Mother-General's re-election, August 26th, 1845. Not reading it to them at once, he said, “The Chapter-General is over; the Mother Superioress is elected; can you guess her name?” upon which they all answered, “It can only be our good Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia;” and when he told them they had guessed aright they intoned the *Te Deum*, His Eminence joining them in singing it.

That whole evening the name of their dearest, most beloved Mother was constantly on their lips, and the Cardinal told them that their union with their Foundress was a visible mark of the Presence of God in their midst. The love of the Mother House with which she had inspired them, also touched him. One day he noticed a little box, closed with red sealing-wax, which they seemed to keep with much care, on which was written, “O Sion, if I ever forget thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth” (Ps. cxxxvi. 6).

Thinking it perhaps contained relics he asked to have it opened, and to his amazement found it had nothing but earth in it. "What are you going to do with that?" he asked. "Eminence," was the reply, "it is earth from the garden of our Mother House. We intend to put it by itself just in the middle of our garden here, and plant a rose-bush in it; the roses it bears will have the virtue of having been nourished by the very earth of our dear Mother House."

Such incidents attracted him more and more to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, who, had he known it, resembled himself in many points. There were in both the same enthusiasm for God's service, generous self-devotedness, holy buoyancy of spirit in times of trial, boundless confidence in Divine Providence; even in her methods of action, in the way she governed and formed her household of religious, her love of her rules and Constitutions, there was a certain similarity.

Fully convinced that the exact observance of rules and constitutions contributes most effectively to the perpetuation and prosperity of Communities, he was wont to read with a pious delight the custom-book, and especially the book of the Constitutions of the Good Shepherd. He told the Sisters that having the approval of the Holy See, they might rest assured of the stability and development of their Congregation, and betake themselves to their work in all security, under the eyes and the guidance of the Supreme Pastor and of their Cardinal Protector. True, the path of the

Institute over the stormy sea of the world might be strewn with dangerous reefs, but that, lashed to the bark of Peter, it would ever come forth unscathed by assaults of hell. "How glad am I to have religious of the Good Shepherd at Imola!"

He liked to be told how each hour of the day was spent at Angers. One evening he asked, "What do they do at the close of recreation?"

"Eminence, Mother-General, surrounded by her daughters, gives the intention for the next morning's Communion; she exhorts them to mutual charity, and gives them her blessing."

"That is good," said he; "we will do just the same." Then he addressed a few encouraging words to the little Community, gave them their intention for Communion, and, after having blessed his dear daughters and wished them the peace of the Lord, withdrew.

When they first arrived at Imola he provided all they required for their penitents in the way of house linen and clothing. He also gave them the necessary furniture for their chapel: a handsome tabernacle surmounted by a silver cross, six gilt candlesticks, a chalice, a ciborium, and a fine picture representing the Good Shepherd and the Divine Shepherdess keeping a flock of sheep. The idea for the picture he had himself given to the artist.

But in the midst of all this gladsome calm an event occurred which seemed likely to frustrate the hopes and plans of the Sisters and of their revered Founder. One day he came to their rooms, his eyes filled with

tears, and his whole countenance expressing anxiety. They asked the reason of his emotion, their own faces turning pale at the sight of it. "My dear daughters," he replied, "serious things have happened this week in the Romagna. The noises you have been hearing come from Rimini, where war has broken out, and it is only eighteen miles from Imola. Should the revolt continue, I fear this town will fall into the hands of the Church's enemies, and every one of the rebels is bent upon attacking me. Should it last only a little while even, I should be forced into seeking refuge in some farmhouse in the environs. But you must not fear for your own safety, my dear daughters, although it is possible I may have to send you to the convent of Dominican nuns."

Their consternation at the news of their Founder's peril may be imagined, and that night they spent in prayer. Very early the next morning a coach, surrounded by twelve armed men, drove into the courtyard, and, hearing the clatter, the Sisters supposed it had come to carry off the Cardinal to some unknown place. Three hours passed in this suspense; but at last he came himself, and told them that a Cardinal had arrived in the carriage, that he had been staying at his country-house near Imola for some time, but alarmed by the rumours of war and generally troubled state of matters, was returning to Rome, surrounded by a military escort in case of attack on the road.

This, of course, calmed the Sisters' fears, and, thanks

to the public prayers ordered by His Eminence at the first alarm, things gradually calmed down.

When the Sisters' own house was ready for them, before they left the Bishop's palace he assembled them in his chapel, and, kneeling before the altar, recited the *Veni, Creator, Sub Tuum*, and other prayers, then gave them the following address: "The time you have spent in this house has not been wasted. It has helped me to become acquainted with you before confiding to you a mission which, beautiful as it is indeed, is still a thorny and difficult one. Now I feel sure you will fulfil it with zeal and with prudence. I bless you and your work. I wish you every blessing of Heaven, that you may work bravely for the souls confided to you."

The religious, seeing his emotion, and unwilling therefore to prolong the scene, said only a few words of grateful acknowledgment for all the kindness he had shown them, promised to make every effort to respond thereto by their devotedness to the work he had so much at heart, and for which he had made so many sacrifices, and then took their leave. The blessing of their convent took place on the 15th October 1845, and on the 20th the Superior was formally installed.

His Eminence the Cardinal presided at the ceremony, accompanied by many ecclesiastics. Countess Argentina Guicioli, a lady devoted to the religious and their work, was also present.

After Mass the Cardinal received the profession of

faith of the Mother Prioress, and gave a touching address; then followed Benediction of the Most Holy Sacrament, after which, accompanied by the rest of the clergy and the religious, he went up to the Community-room, where breakfast was served for him and the other guests. After breakfast he went over the whole house, telling the Sisters for what purpose each room was intended, all with the utmost kindness of manner. For the ordinary confessor of the little Community he appointed a Capuchin father who was present, reserving to himself the function of Extraordinary. Finally, he promised to send them some penitents next day, and he kept his word. Three poor girls, in a most rebellious state and very unwilling to come, were next day brought to the door with very great difficulty; but no sooner did their eyes rest on the religious in their white habit standing there inviting them gently to come in than they became calm, and entered unresistingly. Those who brought them said to them, "Well, why were you so troublesome with us when you are like lambs now?"—"Ah!" answered one, "the white nuns have had a grace given them to calm us that you have not.—We like them already, and will not give them any trouble."

This little story was repeated to Cardinal Mastai, and was such a consolation to him that he wrote to the religious that very day as follows:—

"IMOLA, *October 21th*, 1845.

"The work of God is begun, and this is a great consolation to me, for I am sure the Lord, through

the religious of the Good Shepherd, will make known the work of His mercy. You will be instruments in the Lord's hands, who has given you all the gifts necessary for this holy enterprise—capacity, activity, and good-will—so that you will succeed perfectly. But, nevertheless, always remember that you are nothing but instruments in God's hands, and that hence you should continually ask Him for docility, that the instruments may readily correspond with the movements of the Divine hand. In a word, when you are jealous guardians of *your Constitutions*, and of all the holy regulations of your Institute, you may be sure that you will do great things for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. In this holy trust I live myself, and I desire to express it in writing to you that you may at all times be able to read these sentiments of mine to encourage you in the same trust, and to inspire you with a holy courage joyously to go forward with the work undertaken.

“I bless you, and leave you all in the peace of the Lord.—Very affectionately,

“✠ JOHN MARIE MASTAÏ,
Cardinal-Archbishop.”

He was not only the most generous of benefactors to the Good Shepherd, he was also the kindest of fathers. He had promised to visit them for the celebration of their principal feasts, and kept his word. On the 21st November, feast of the Presentation of our Blessed Lady, he presided at the renewal of

vows, and gave a touching exhortation appropriate to the occasion. Mme. Guicioli was again present, and when the ceremony was over she appealed to him to remark how well the penitents behaved, the order and cleanliness of the house, in a word all the advantages and great utility of the work he had founded, in bringing Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's daughters to Imola.

On the 8th February, feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, he came again, celebrated the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, established the Archconfraternity of the Children of Mary at the Good Shepherd, and gave several penitents the ribbon and medal. Able thus to judge himself of the state of the penitents, and finding them in good dispositions, he congratulated himself the more on having introduced the Good Shepherd into his episcopal city.

A few days before Pentecost, the religious sent him a beautiful alb embroidered by one of them, a present which greatly pleased and touched him. He wrote to them as follows :—

“IMOLA, *May 11th*, 1846.

“I have received the alb you have sent me, and am very grateful for it. It is too much, my dear daughters. I know that your beautiful gift is meant to show your gratitude to me, but every day I receive tokens of it in the care you bestow, and in the fatigue you endure for the well-being and happiness of your dear penitents.

“I beseech the Holy Ghost, whose feast we are

celebrating, to give all of you His gifts in His infinite goodness, and at the same time I again tell you that from my heart, I am your very affectionate servant,

“✠ JOHN MARIE, CARDINAL MASTAI,
Archbishop.”

About this time the Cardinal, who greatly admired the Rules and Constitutions of the Good Shepherd, determined to have them translated into Italian, but being summoned to Rome upon the death of Gregory XVI. (June 1846), did not carry out his intention. His successor, however, Cardinal Gaetano Baluffi, had the translation made. It was printed at Imola in 1854, and has proved of great utility to all the Italian houses of the Good Shepherd.

The death of Gregory XVI. was a sad event for the Congregation and for the Foundress in particular, and she ordered prayers for the repose of his soul to be offered in all her convents. He had invariably received her so kindly, given her so much encouragement that she felt his death a real bereavement. To him she owed the institution of the Generalat, by him also the Rules and Constitutions, modified and adapted to the needs of the Institute, had been approved. Under his Pontificate the Institute had developed immensely, while to him was also due the foundation of the two Roman houses. Having been a Camaldolese monk, he retained a holy affection for the religious Orders. Under the majesty of the Sovereign Pontiff she had always found the kindness

of a father ; and not only had he shown her great personal kindness, but he had been her guide and helper in the difficulties connected with the Constitutions.

While still under the impression caused by his death, she wrote to her daughters at Imola of her distress in losing one on whom she had so relied for guidance ; but, as if inspired by God, she expressed a conviction, that at the approaching conclave Cardinal Mastai would be elected Pope, " and Mme. d'Andigné is of the same opinion," added she.

The event proved that she had spoken almost prophetically.

Before leaving Imola His Eminence came himself to announce his departure to his dear daughters of the Good Shepherd. It would be hard to describe this touching scene of farewell. Although he promised to come back to Imola after the Pope's election, the religious had a sad presentiment that this hope would never be realised, and were so full of grief at the thought of losing the father who had been so good, so kind to them, the benefactor to whom they were so much indebted, that they were unable to hide their grief. The penitents wept also. His Eminence spoke these words: " Be comforted, my dear daughters, my dear children. I shall be back again in a month's time, and the Bishop of Imola will return full of plans for the future ; he intends to ask the Pope for means to build a large convent to hold a hundred penitents."

He then told the Sisters these plans for the future

of the monastery he loved so well, upon which they showed him their Mother's letter. He could not help smiling, and said, "I am sure your Mother-General is a Saint, but all the same I do not think we need put faith in her prophecy. Be at rest about it; Cardinal Mastai will return." But nevertheless the Community were in tears when he left.

Two days after the Conclave all the bells in Rome and the cannon of Castle St. Angelo proclaimed that Cardinal Mastai was elected Pope. When the news reached Angers Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia caused the bell to be rung to summon the Community. Then in a voice trembling with emotion, she said, "Long live Pius IX.!" and told her daughters that the newly elected Father of all the Faithful was the same kind father who for eight months had entertained their dear Sisters in his own palace at Imola.

It was the twelfth of June when the Cardinal went to Rome for the Conclave, which met on the 16th. Immediately after his election had taken place the Holy Father Pius IX. sent one of the Noble Guard to Imola; he came to the Good Shepherd to announce the great news. It is easier to imagine than describe the emotion with which this Pontifical ambassador was received, and forthwith a letter of congratulation from the little Community was despatched to the august Founder of their house.

At Angers the news was, as we have seen, also joyfully received. The following extracts are from letters Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia wrote in the first fer-

your of her gratitude to God for an event which was an answer to her prayers, the fulfilment of one of her most ardent hopes. The first is addressed to the Superior at Poitiers:—

“Never, my dearest daughter, has the Institute received such a grace! It is a miracle, a marvel! Oh, what a Pope! My daughters, my dear daughters, you at least feel what this grace is. Ah, forget yourselves in these mercies of God. Oh, how happy for you it all is!”

And again to the Superior at Avignon:—

“My daughter, my obedient, loving daughter, I did indeed mourn in the Sacred Heart for the Holy Father we have lost, incomparable as he was, and then I prayed. . . . Then I must confess to you when I heard the name of Pius IX., a Pontiff so holy, so specially dear to us, I felt as if I should almost die of love of God and joy! Yes, my faithful children, you are safe for ever now!—Your attached Mother in our Lord,

“MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA,
Superior.”

A beautiful circular letter, written at Mother Foundress' dictation, was addressed to all the Communities of the Good Shepherd, to inform them of the good news, and tell them to thank God for so signal a favour.

CHAPTER XIV

CAIRO—MOTHER PELLETIER'S ZEAL

1845-1846

Mgr. Guasco—Letters from Mother Pelletier—Her zeal for the conversion of infidels—Her anxiety about the American houses—Moulins—Angoulême—The Mother-General's devotion to the beauty of Divine worship—Charity to guests—Strength in resisting suffering.

ONE December day, in 1845, the townspeople of Anjou were astonished to see a priest conducting a little band of negro girls through their streets. It was M. Olivieri bringing African recruits to the Good Shepherd. A moving scene was enacted when they arrived. According to the custom of their country, they first kissed the hand of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia as a token of reverence; then, to show their affection, fell upon her neck, and rejoicing in these new conquests to Divine grace, she gladly submitted to these demonstrations.

Her wonderful power for converting undisciplined, disobedient characters was now widely recognised. About this time the Superior of the convent of the Sacred Heart in Rome, the Trinità dei Monti, sent her a little Polish countess who bore a character for wild impetuosity of temper and insubordination. The child

came unsuspectingly to the Good Shepherd, but immediately she found herself there, and surrounded by the nuns whom Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia charged with the task of her education, she began to display her unruly disposition. Gradually, however, the influence of the resistless rule, the ascendancy of the Mothers, their devoted affection, even when mingled with needful severity, told upon her, and in a year's time Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia was able to return her to the Trinità dei Monti, gentle, good, amiable—in a word transformed.

The Good Shepherd was now becoming a centre of attraction to souls yearning to devote themselves to the conversion of others. They came from all countries and from every class. It was a constant exchange, so to speak, between the Good Shepherd and the world, the latter sending to the former chosen souls which the Good Shepherd trained in all the virtues of the religious state, and then sent forth to the conquest of the most abandoned sinners. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia welcomed these vocations, and thanked God for them, surrounded them with religious care, for on them depended the future of the Order. Now and then it happened that some plant of rare promise would be cut off early, but even then she was resigned, believing she had gained in heaven what she seemed to lose here below.

It was in these sentiments of tender piety that at the close of 1845 she witnessed the death of a most promising novice, Countess von Schaesberg, at the age

of twenty, whose noble birth enhanced her modesty and simplicity; and Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, remarking the joyful alacrity with which she helped in the kitchen and house-work, had looked forward to her rendering good service to the work of God in the future.

About the time she died, one of her compatriots, Sister Mary of St. Teresa, Baroness de Rump (who also belonged to a great family), was sent out to Cairo with a little band of Sisters, at the request of Mgr. de Guasco. Africa, with its ancient associations, its curse of slavery, its myriads of souls ignorant as yet of the glad tidings of the Gospel, had a very strong attraction for Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia. To deliver captives was one of her aspirations; her soul was filled with the holy ardour of a St. Peter Claver.

According to the measure of her means, she was probably the forerunner of all who in this nineteenth century have been engaged in combating the slave trade and ransoming captives.

It was her desire that Mgr. de Herc  should give his blessing to her daughters before they left for Africa; but he could not come. He sent them, however, a prayer-book written in various languages, and a summary of the elementary principles of these same languages. "May God," he wrote, in his letter of parting good wishes, "command the sea to be calm and smiling beneath the footsteps of His Angels."

The venerable Bishop's prayer was heard, and early in December the Egyptian fellah¹ might have seen a

¹ "Fellah," labourer.

boat on the Nile, sailing through the crops and flowers that border the great stream, and carrying from Alexandria to Cairo the white ladies whom one poor black man thought must be angels, because they were so kind, so devoted to people they did not even know.

The King of Sardinia paid their passage to Alexandria, at which port they were received by the Sardinian consul. From Bulag (about a mile from Cairo) they rode on donkeys to the Church of the Franciscan Fathers, thinking the while of our Divine Lord's entrance to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Everything they saw had a strange unfamiliar appearance; the minarets, the mosques with their domes, the plantations of tall palm-trees bordering the streets, the many-coloured costumes of the various nations.

On reaching the Fathers' church they found five places set apart for them in front of the altar, and the verses of Psalm xliv., "The virgins that follow her shall be brought to the king," &c., were sung in their name before a crowded congregation of Catholics of the Greek, Coptic, and other rites. Their own house was not quite ready, and the Fathers lent them meanwhile one of theirs. Here they at once started a class, which was attended by Arabs, Assyrians, Copts, negresses, and Jewesses. Much curiosity was excited by the Sisters' arrival, and they were visited by every foreign consul in Cairo, by the Pasha, Mehemet Ali, and by most of the principal Arab sheiks. In the meantime Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia was expecting news from Egypt with pious impatience, and in January received the first

letters. She opened them with emotion, and read them to the Community as annals of the Propagation of the Faith, following every step of her daughters' journey, and all the details of their installation in the Palace Bogohi Bey, which they bought. It was one of those old Cairo palaces which, with their quiet-looking exteriors, their doors jealously guarding the hidden beauty of the interior, their courts with cloisters, trees, and fountains, are easily adapted to the requirements of a convent. It was a place for recollection, though in a disordered state, through the neglect and indolence of its former occupants, but the nuns were not long in introducing order and industry.

Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia read, with feelings of tender devotion, letters she received from her daughters, telling her of a pious pilgrimage they made to the chapels of the Coptic church of old Cairo. It is believed to be built on the site of the house in which the Holy Family lived at the time of the Flight into Egypt. They also sent her some dust from the same sacred spot, which she received with much reverence.

On January 16th, 1846, Mgr. Guasco wrote to her as follows:—

“ I am anxious to tell you how glad I am to have my dear daughters of the Good Shepherd near me. It is impossible to find words to express my feelings, but I may at least tell you that for a whole week I could hardly restrain my tears. The whole population—Catholics, heretics, Musülmans—admire the work, and look upon it as a token of Divine mercy.

All unite in blessing your Reverence for having thought of founding an establishment in Cairo."

He asked for more religious, and suggested to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia to send them through Turin, as she had sent the others. The King of Sardinia and his ministers were great benefactors of the Good Shepherd. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia addressed a letter to his Majesty, offering him her grateful thanks for his great kindness to her dear daughters. She also wrote to the Sardinian consul in Cairo, M. Vernani, who showed them the utmost kindness. He arranged with Mgr. Guasco one day to take them to see the Pyramids, which lie about four leagues from Cairo, on the Gizeh road. After Mass (said by the Bishop) the little caravan, comprising fifteen persons mounted on asses, started on the expedition. It proved very fatiguing for the Sisters, for in order to visit the Queen's Chamber in the interior of one of the Pyramids, they had to crawl through passages on their hands and knees in an atmosphere thick with the dust of ages and scorchingly hot. But they were very greatly impressed by these huge monuments, thrown up in the desert, to perpetuate the memory of the mighty dead. They were much struck by the contrast between the opulent country houses, the harvest fields still clothed in the green of spring and enamelled with flowers, which they passed on their way, and the huge blocks of masonry flung out into the arid desert by the hand of man. The colossal Sphinx, rearing her mighty head above the sand, which

has crept up to her very throat, and calmly gazing on the apparently boundless ocean of sand, seemed to them like the handiwork of giant craftsmen.

At the foot of the Pyramids, the Bedouins in attendance pitched a tent by M. Vernani's orders, and prepared breakfast, after which a toast was drunk in honour of the name familiar to the Cairo benefactors of the Good Shepherd, as it was in many other places, the name of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia.

The Mother Prioress, in all her perplexities and difficulties, used to go and gaze at the portrait of Mother Foundress as if to seek her advice. Meanwhile the house at Cairo for months occupied a very prominent place in the Mother's mind and heart. Many letters passed between her and her daughters; she wrote also to their local benefactors. Mgr. Guasco kept up a regular correspondence with her.

"How distressed I and my daughters of the Good Shepherd were at not receiving letters from Angers," wrote he. "But now that the blessing of Providence rests with approval on the zeal and labours of your Reverence, we are satisfied. Just as I was sending my European letters to your daughters for them to read, they sent me those they received yesterday. On seeing the progress of your holy Institute, I am so touched that it is useless even to attempt to describe the consolation I feel. I confess that formerly I knew nothing about the Congregation of the Good Shepherd; but now that I know the Constitutions, the burning zeal of her who holds

the first place in the government of the work, her daughters' single-mindedness, the Divine Spirit which leads them, I shall ever speak of it as a work altogether Divine."

Father Sebastian Birani, Commissary of the Holy Land, also wrote to her. He had seen her daughters at Leghorn. "By the Lord's permission I made the acquaintance of four of your daughters at Leghorn, where they disembarked on their voyage to Cairo. I was so struck by their many amiable qualities and virtues that I cannot refrain from giving myself the pleasure of congratulating your Reverence upon what you may fairly claim as your own, since the good qualities of the daughter are the riches of the Mother."

The letters of Mother Foundress to her daughters at Cairo were unusually lengthy, no doubt because she was aware that, at so great a distance, they stood in unusual need of such support. "We have just received your precious letter," they once wrote; "it has indeed comforted and encouraged us; all our dear Sisters join me in thanks for it. We read it over and over again, for our Sisters always said, 'Once more! once more! tell us something more about our Mother General.' Your letters are the only consolation of your poor daughters in Egypt."

It was very difficult to establish the work in Cairo. Not that there was any lack of the class for whose conversion it was principally intended (a class more numerous there than even in European towns); but prejudice, differences of religion and custom were

hindrances hard to overcome. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, however, encouraged her daughters; she exhorted them to bend to circumstances; to do the good they could, if they could not do the good they would.

She particularly encouraged them in the work of educating the young, inciting them to open classes for little girls of all nations and religions. In the Cairo school, negro and white, Muslim and Catholic, Maronite and Jewess sat side by side, speaking various tongues. These differences, patent even in dress, were a touching sign of the strength of that charity which gathers under the care of the One Shepherd the lambs of so many folds.

The convent at Cairo is often also the place chosen for the abjuration of heretics and the baptism of infidels. A schismatic mother and her three children were here received into the Catholic Church; a slave was brought by her master for religious instruction. The young women and Arab families, who came into contact with the Superior, soon began to hold her authority in great respect. She was procuratrix as well as Superior, and, like a faithful daughter of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, adapted herself to the exigencies of the situation. In buying provisions she used an Arab dictionary, lest she might be cheated. Egypt, with its history coëval with that of the world, retains very primitive usages, customs very unlike those of Europe, and was for ever offering unwonted sights to the religious. The children they received

were of so poor a class that many could not pay even the modest fee required for their schooling, but at Easter some families paid in kind—lambs were brought and eggs, the latter in such quantities that the kitchen was full of them.

To gain the hearts of the children the Sisters established those devotions of the Church which appeal to the tenderest emotions, the month of Mary, the Archconfraternity of her Most Sacred Heart.

Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia had already written to thank the Sardinian consul, Cavaliere Vernani, for all his kindness, when, by order of Mgr. Guasco, communicated to the French consul, the convent was placed under the protection of the King of Sardinia, and declared to be his property. From that time the king, Charles Albert, his ministers, his consul, all Sardinian officials, showed the kindest feeling towards the house and religious. "Every Sister of the Good Shepherd will always find in me a sincere admirer, a devoted servant," wrote M. Vernani on the 27th April 1846.

Meanwhile, the greatest interest in the progress of the Cairo mission was felt at the Mother House. When a second band of religious was sent out from Angers, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia invited M. Descordes (who was preaching the Lenten Station at the Cathedral) to come and preach a farewell sermon for the missionary religious, which he did in a manner so impressive that the Sisters and some ladies of the town, who with the Bishop's leave had seats in the

choir, were moved to tears. The month of Mary that year, by Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's wish, was celebrated with special solemnity, to draw down the blessing of our Blessed Lady upon the African mission. There was a daily procession, in which our Lady's statue was carried on a richly decorated brancard, and every evening a meditation on our Lady's virtues, followed by Benediction. As we have already observed, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, following the Church's example, varied the course of the year with divers feasts to edify her children.

Her prayers for Cairo were heard. In 1851 Mgr. Guasco bought another house for the mission, again an Arab house, but larger and healthier than the first. In 1869 the Pasha, Ismaïl, gave a large piece of ground to the Sisters, but it was near the railway station, where every year the Mecca pilgrims congregate. They therefore sold it, and, with the money, bought a large property at Choubrah, near a favourite Cairo drive, and here, in time, a complete convent with proper quarters for all sections of the Community was built.

Thus were accomplished Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's desires for the African mission, so dear to her heart. Her houses in Cairo contained besides Europeans of every nation, including Maltese, Egyptian, Armenian, Syrian, Chaldean, Soudanese, and Indian girls. Some were Catholics of the Latin or Greek rites, some Chaldean, some Maronite, some Armenian Catholics, some Catholic, some Monophysite Copts.

The children belonging to the different Catholic rites all made their Easter Communion in the churches of their own rites. The Greek and Copt laity receive Communion under both kinds. All were, however, equally the Sisters' pupils, and the catechism was daily taught in French, Italian, and Arabic.

In following Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's life, we have to carry our minds from one hemisphere to the other, from Europe to America. While letters from Rome brought glad news of the events attending the accession of Pius IX., of his visits to the Roman houses, of his paternal love for his "dear daughters" of the Good Shepherd, war had broken out in the United States, the negro population was assuming a threatening attitude, and the religious in their new houses were placed in an anxious position.

But charity is the safest shield against popular passion; it calms the wretched by relieving them. In the midst of war, and menaced by the rebels, the convent at St. Louis thrived. The penitents' class grew; there were more abjurations from Protestantism than usual. The American spirit of enterprise and industry penetrated into the convent. Exquisite lace was made in it; shoes for the Community, soap, candles—all were home-made. The daughters of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia acted upon her principles, conforming to the usages of the country they inhabited, adapting themselves to the requirements of their mission. They were edified and supported by visits from Mgr. Flaget, who, while always exhorting them

to reproduce the very image of the Mother House so far as they were able, always also congratulated them upon the well ordered state of their house and garden, and encouraged them to persevere in pious constancy.

They copied the Angers processions in honour of the Blessed Virgin, and sang at Mass and Benediction, thereby greatly edifying the children. In one of Mother Mary of St. Andrew Corsini O'Rourke's letters she mentions the miraculous cure of a Sister, long ill, obtained by following the advice of Mgr. Flaget.

But to return to Europe. For two years certain pious people at Moulins had wished to have the Good Shepherd established in their town to be a home for penitent women, and had recommended the intention to our Blessed Lady. She heard their prayer, and Mme. Dorat, who was interested in the scheme, became foundress. She wished the house to be dedicated to the Immaculate Conception, and, to her great delight, found that the same idea had occurred to Mother-General. The Bishop of Moulins, who was over eighty years of age, had heard so excellent a report of the Congregation from M. Chalandon, the Vicar-General of Metz, that he was ready to grant the newly arrived religious every favour in his power. He made his Vicar-General Superior of the convent; Father Gérard, Marist, ordinary confessor; M. Martin, Superior of the College of Yseure, the extraordinary.

Mother Mary of the Conception set to work to remodel the old house bought for the Community,

and, aided by Mme. Dorat and Mme. Charles, established the usual classes. In December 1846, writing to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, she told her there were ten penitents and sixteen Preservation children in the convent.

A few months later it was visited by M. Dufêtre, Bishop of Nevers. He had been Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's director at the refuge in Tours, and, while admiring the growth of the work, told the Sisters many interesting anecdotes of their Mother-General's beginnings.

The Bishop of Angoulême, M. Regnier, who, as Vicar-General at Angers, had done so much to help Mother Pelletier in her work, still remained her director to some extent. He used often to advise her, sometimes even about her health, which, he told her, she ought as a matter of conscience to care for. He still watched with interest the development of her work at home and abroad, and cordially shared her joy when the French Government announced that her convents in the East should be under the protection of the French flag. He now wrote expressing a desire to have a house of the Good Shepherd in his cathedral city, a request it seemed impossible to refuse, especially as Cardinal Patrizi wrote about it too, and said that if Mother-General had religious to spare for it he should be glad to hear that the foundation was to be made. Delighted to have an opportunity of showing her gratitude to M. Regnier, she readily made pecuniary sacrifices, and bought a house and grounds at

Angoulême, and then determined to go there herself to be present during the inauguration of the house, see M. Regnier, seek his advice, and prove to him her attachment. She took with her, as a travelling companion, Mother Mary of St. Celestine. The following extract, from a circular letter from Poitiers, shows with what mingled joy and filial piety Mother-General was received there when paying a passing visit on this journey :—

“ December 1846.

“ The most signal favour which our good Saviour has bestowed upon us this year was the visit of our Revered Mother-General to our monastery. On the 4th August we had the joy of embracing her. We took her first to the choir, and she went to Holy Communion. It touched us to see with what angelic fervour she received our Lord. After she had made her thanksgiving she came and sat with us. Her words were so sweet, so full of unction, that we listened in a rapture of pure delight. We begged her to rest herself a little while ; but she would not consent, saying it rested her to be with us. She then heard another Mass. On meeting again in the Community-room her charity told us of the progress of the Mother House and its offshoots, and of the consolation this gave her.”

Till the time of parting the Community at Poitiers was in this state of jubilation, in possessing her who had founded it, and whose spirit was from afar its animating

principle. On her return from Angoulême the Mother spent two more days with her children at Poitiers: "She told us of the wonders God had been pleased to work by the Institute in Africa, in America, and spoke of her dear negro children. Her every word was so full of unction that it thrilled our hearts with gladness, the Sisters said. She conferred with each in private. The hours sped by too swiftly, and the sad hour of parting came which was to deprive us of this Angel of consolation, leaving us in calm and peace."

Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia was endowed with wondrous activity. God alone, the Author of the great projects she developed, could have given her the strength required for her work. The convent grew larger each year, and people said of her that she lived, trowel in hand, always building, always repairing. On St. Euphrasia's feast, 13th March 1846, she began a new wing for the Community of Magdalens; the first stone was blessed by M. Joubert. On the same day the first stone of a private chapel for the penitents was also blessed, and about the same time, the sacristies were transferred and enlarged. The different classes were ever increasing in numbers, and now and then the building had to be enlarged to make more room for these.

As we have more than once remarked, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia strongly felt the necessity of religious functions in a Community like that of the Good Shepherd. She delighted in multiplying religious festivals,

and was not content with those of the more ordinary kind, for she believed that the majesty of the Church's liturgical ceremonies is a more efficacious method of reaching simple souls than learned sermons, and thought that the beauty of Divine worship, which works upon the soul through the imagination, attracts it to God.

When the Magdalens' choir was completed she invited the Abbot of La Trappe at Bellefontaine, to come and bless the new building. The ceremony took place on the 4th June 1846, and was preceded by Holy Mass, which Father Mary Augustine said in the chapel of the Good Shepherd. The profession of several religious followed, and then the Reverend Father was solemnly introduced into the enclosure, and conducted processionally to the Magdalens' choir, which he blessed with all the prescribed ceremonies. After the function the Mother showed him the classes. He admired the order and animation in the several sections of the convent. About a month after this, on the 13th July, the Archbishop of Damascus, Mgr. Heliani, came to visit the Community, and Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia presented four of M. Olivieri's negro girls to him for Baptism. This ceremony, and the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, given by his Grace, created a lively interest in the house. He also blessed a statue of the Guardian Angel at Mother of St. Euphrasia's request: it was to be a memorial of his passing visit. When taking his leave of the Good Shepherd, Mgr. Heliani said, "I came to your

monastery with the pleasure Jacob felt when he went to see Joseph in Egypt; but I leave you with the regret Joseph felt when he left his brethren."

Less than one month later Mgr. Angebault came to administer the sacrament of Confirmation to candidates from the several classes, and preached to them. In the following September Father Moret gave a Retreat, closing on the feast of our Lady's Nativity, which, like that of the Immaculate Conception, has been celebrated in Anjou from very early times. The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin is observed in the diocese of Angers as the feast of our Lady of Anjou, a custom which Mother-General loved the Blessed Virgin too well not to observe. Mary's feasts, the feasts of the dear Immaculate Virgin, Mother of the child Jesus, always rejoice the hearts of the young. To the Christian child the sun on these holidays seems to shed a brighter radiance, nature to wear a fairer aspect. The pious child on these occasions invests whatever is about him with the hallowed joy that fills his soul; his very attire betokens his heart's delight.

On November 7th, Mgr. Hercé, the steadfast friend of evil days, passing through Angers on his way to Rome, paid a visit to the Good Shepherd, to preach to the Italian, English, and German Sisters. He said Mass, and gave Holy Communion to all the sections of the house. On the morrow Mgr. Bourget, Bishop of Montreal in Canada, visited the Community. He thanked Mother-General for sending to his diocese

religious whose union of spirit and devotion to their Mother House gave so much edification.

In the end of November, Mgr. Vérolles, Bishop of Colombo and Vicar-Apostolic of Manchuria, came. He told the nuns of his travels across Asia, begun originally with twelve colleagues, some of whom had died of the hardships of the journey, others through the barbarous cruelty of the Chinese. These stories of suffering, bravely endured for the Name of Jesus, kindled the zeal of the Sisters, among whom some were themselves destined for foreign missions.

Mother Pelletier delighted to show hospitality to these saintly men. She left nothing undone to make their reception worthy of the Lord they represented.

Her innate graciousness and generosity shone forth on these occasions; the house presented a festive appearance, the chapels and assembly-rooms were adorned with wreaths and flowers. She invited such of the clergy as were the friends of the house, to do honour to her guests and meet them. Verses were composed and sung in their honour. Her joy and gratitude would have made it seem that she was receiving rather than bestowing a favour. Hence every guest, whether Bishop or missionary, went away deeply impressed by such kindness. Despite the poverty of her convent, she ever found means of entertaining liberally, for she was large-hearted and munificent. M. de Senisheim, one of the King of Sardinia's ministers, told the nuns at Munich that he left the Good Shepherd at Angers feeling

much as the Queen of Saba did after he visit to Solomon.

She exerted herself beyond her strength, however, and the year 1846 closed with illness. On the 22nd of December, in the midst of her cares for the numerous houses of the Order, she was suddenly seized with a violent headache, and lost consciousness and the power of motion. Her terrified daughters had her bled, and when she recovered consciousness and saw them standing round her in tears, she said to them, "You are there, my children—I thought of all of you; I was very close to God. Oh, I thought I was going to die! It was only your prayers that brought me back to life."

The attack left distressing consequences, and for a long time afterwards she was subject to feverishness.

CHAPTER XV

TRIALS AND VIRTUES OF MOTHER PELLETIER

1846-1847

Devotion to our Blessed Lady—Venerable Mother Barat—Mother Javouhey—Death of Mother de la Roche—Spirit of work, of poverty, of self-sacrifice—Negro girls—Miracle at Bourges.

FOUNDED in poverty, the Good Shepherd continued to exist in poverty. The Foundress relied on Divine Providence for maintenance, and loved to remind her daughters of the poverty of their state as a motive for trust in God and a reason for constant industry.

“We have spoken of the Institute of the Sacred Heart,” she said in one of her instructions, “and have pointed out wherein that holy Society (which I greatly revere) differs from our own little Congregation. The religious of the Sacred Heart do not aim only at giving their pupils a brilliant education, but also training them in piety and innocence. Their work necessarily brings them into contact with great people, and they have to keep up a certain appearance of affluence, although they are in reality very poor themselves.

“Our aim is to attract penitents, to receive all who

come, to refuse none though never so poor, and a special Providence seems to watch over our houses. They are often without means, yet the common necessities of life are never altogether wanting. Help always comes from God at the right time. We have instances of this every year in our circular letters.

“At Metz, for instance, at a time when, in consequence of the great drought, provisions were very dear, a day came at length when the good Superior, having bought food enough to last a few days, had no money left, not enough even to pay the postage of a letter that came from Angers. In this extremity she threw herself at the feet of the Blessed Virgin, and putting all her confidence in her power, resolved to try and borrow 1000 francs. She had but just finished writing a letter for the purpose when she was called to the parlour. There she found a person with a donation of 500 francs for the monastery. The same evening some one else brought 500 more, and next day the Superior, M. Chalandon, visited the Community, bringing another 500, which some one had given him for the Good Shepherd, so, as you may imagine, the letter was torn up.

“This, my dear children, is only one among a thousand instances in which the Lord has come to our assistance in similar straits.”

As the Good Shepherd depended on the earnings of the inmates nothing could be laid by for hard times, and during the scarcity which prevailed in France in

1846-47, the Community was reduced to great want, and work was about to cease, as there were no more orders. The living suggestive faith, the fertile charity of the Superioress, were shown by the means to which she had recourse in this distress. She proposed to her Community that the Blessed Virgin should be solemnly declared Foundress and Superior of the Congregation, and especially of her own convent. Assembling her daughters, therefore, in the chapel, on New Year's Day 1847, in the name of the whole Institute she besought the Queen of heaven to give bread to her children, promising for herself and her daughters in return the following devotions: (1.) On every Saturday, for a year, a procession with the singing of the Litanies and *Sub Tuum*; (2.) that on the same day three professed religious should go into Retreat in honour of our Lady; (3.) that every Sunday seven novices should make a Retreat in honour of the Seven Dolours of this beloved Mother; (4.) that the same day five Magdalens and the children of St. Michael's should go into retreat in honour of the Five Wounds of our Lord; (5.) that five consecrated penitents should go to Communion on Friday, in honour of the Five Wounds, and should make a Retreat the following Sunday.

In these promises the whole Community, sharing her confidence in the Blessed Virgin's protection, cordially joined.

The title of the Monastery, Our Lady of Charity, was no mere empty name to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia. Her devotion to Mary, founded on an

enlightened knowledge of our Blessed Lady's virtues and privileges, was no commonplace devotion. She constantly meditated upon, often spoke to her daughters of the virtues of the Immaculate Virgin, predestined from all eternity to be the Mother of God, chosen among all women, even the greatest, holiest among those of the old Law, to be the Temple of the living God. She loved to expatiate upon the part assigned to her as co-operatrix in our Redemption, as the Mother of Christians, the Comforter of the afflicted, the Refuge of sinners. She delighted in her instructions to combine devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and devotion to the Blessed Virgin; drawing her daughters' minds to the great truth, that as the Body and Blood of our Lord in the Sacrament of the Altar are the Body and Blood formed in the womb of Mary, we are, therefore, indebted to her for the Eucharist, for our redemption, for the human nature of our Lord. Let us listen to her own words: "There can be no doubt that our love of the Blessed Virgin, our devotion to her can never be too great. Her help will never fail us, and our Lord takes infinite pleasure in receiving humble prayers offered to Him through His dear Mother's hands. St. Bernard assures us that no faithful servant of Mary can ever perish; but, my dear daughters, there is no need for me to remind you that the worship we render to Mary ought not to surpass, nor even equal, the worship due to her Son, who is the King of heaven, the King of earth. But devotion to Jesus Christ our Lord, and devotion to Mary, are

closely bound together. The more one loves Jesus Christ in the Most Holy Sacrament the more one will love the Blessed Virgin; and the more one loves the Blessed Virgin the more one will love the most holy Sacrament."

When she prayed to the Blessed Virgin her fervour was contagious. She would often stop a postulant or novice in the cloister and say the beads with her, which her young companion would account a very special grace, feeling also that the intense devotion of the Superior, who seemed to see our Lady really present before her, increased her piety. She said the words *Ave Maria* especially as no one else could. She liked, too, to visit the kitchen, when the meals were being prepared by the lay Sisters, to say the Five Decades with them, ostensibly to teach them how to say the Rosary well, but with the real intention of communicating to them her own loving devotion to the Mother of God, which she did successfully by her edifying example. It is rare to meet a religious of the Good Shepherd passing from one occupation to another who has not her beads in her hands.

The Mother's early home, La Vendée, like all countries that have kept the faith, clings to the popular devotion of the Rosary; father and children say it together round the fireside at night. It was a devotion upon which she laid great stress in her convent; all the classes practised it.

The month of Mary was also observed with great devotion at the Good Shepherd; Mother Mary of St

Euphrasia had instituted a whole series of daily processions for it. The honour of opening the exercises of the day was allotted to the Magdalens. At dawn they passed through the gardens in procession, singing our Lady's praises. Next followed the classes, according to their different ranks, and finally, at eight o'clock in the evening, the religious made their procession, singing the Litanies of Loreto.

These functions of the month of Mary were especially dear to Mother Pelletier. She said in one of her conferences to her Community, "I have already remarked to you that the month of Mary, which has just closed, has been one of the most beautiful we have ever had. You have faithfully observed all that we recommended to you; our exercises have been performed with perfect exactitude. When I heard your voices and those of our dear penitents in the hymns, I felt an ecstasy of joy, and I am convinced that you must, this month, by your prayers, your fervour, your spirit of obedience, have merited great graces for our beloved Institute. I will even venture to say that you have in a manner taken the hearts of Jesus and Mary by storm, and obtained for us the graces we desire.

"I finished my letter to the Blessed Virgin to-day, asking her for postulants. I put these words in, 'My good, my Blessed Mother, please send us chosen souls.' It was not possible for me to use other words: even had I tried to do so I should not have succeeded. And, in fact, true vocations make elect souls. They will come if we have but faith. If we have faith I

hope for a hundred postulants; and you understand, my dear daughters, that I am talking now of subjects really called by God and capable of rendering service some day to the Congregation."

From the 1st of August until the feast of the Assumption, processions, in honour of our Blessed Lady, are resumed every Saturday in the year before Matins, the Community, assembled in the choir sing the *Inviolata*, and the Superior, holding a lighted candle, renews the act of consecration of the whole Institute to the Blessed Virgin, and promises, even at the peril of life, to defend the dogma of the Immaculate Conception.

By this multiplication of devotions Mother Pelletier sought to honour our Blessed Lady. She placed her statues in cloisters, workrooms, and grounds; she erected an altar to her in the Community-room, that the religious might there offer her their act of obedience before leaving for foundations, and to give it a more solemn character she invited Mgr. Angebault to come and bless the altar and say Mass there.

She had intense personal devotion to our Lady, and used even to write her letters such as a child might write to an absent mother, laying before her all her wants, her desires for her Community, as we have seen when she asked her to send postulants. All favours she regarded as the Blessed Virgin's answers to her prayers; she would pour out her heart to her in gratitude, and make the Community offer thanks with her.

That Mary might be perpetually praised in her house she so arranged a systematic recitation of the Rosary aloud in the different offices of the house, that it was a perpetual living Rosary.

All her letters abound with exhortations to practise devotions to our Blessed Lady, and some of them give a delightful insight into her own confidence in the Mother of God. Just when trouble connected with the establishment of the General Superior was pressing hardest, there was a dearth of food in the convent, and, instead of appealing to human charity, she appealed to Mary. "I am going to ask our Lady what I ought to do," she wrote to one of her daughters. "No one else can understand and comfort me. I love her so that I would die for her! My God! my God! what must I do? Silence, prayer, suffering, waiting—these are the lessons our Lady is always teaching me. Oh, pray for me, my dearest children, that I may be faithful to them."

The Blessed Virgin rewarded her confidence with spiritual favours. Often in prayer, in the chapel or at night, she spoke to the heart of Mother Pelletier so clearly, so authoritatively, that there could be no hesitation in obeying. Sometimes the Blessed Virgin would command things to be done, a foundation like that of Sens to be made, which seemed contrary to human prudence; but Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia always obeyed with the docility of a most dutiful child.

Again, when it seemed doubtful whether a parti-

cular religious should be sent to some very difficult and sorely hampered mission, Mother Pelletier always betook herself to the Blessed Virgin for direction, and often received from her answers as decided as if they had been formulated by an earthly voice. Every class in the Good Shepherd shared in her devotion to the Blessed Virgin. The penitents, for instance, had a chapel built in honour of our Lady of Dolours out of their own savings. It was blessed in the end of January 1847 by Father Augustine, Abbot of Belle Fontaine, who on the same day received the vows of twelve novices.

As we have seen, when she heard of insults to our Lady in the outer world, she invented means of reparation. Two such instances we have already mentioned—Notre Dame de Fourvières at Lyons, where, owing to the threatening attitude of the riotous populace in 1834, it was found advisable to suspend all offices for some months. The other outrage occurred at Angers itself, where a newly arrived Protestant minister opened a conventicle with a sermon attacking our Blessed Lady and her Immaculate Conception. In reparation for the insults at Fourvières Mother Pelletier had a chapel built near the penitents' house, and dedicated it to Notre Dame de Fourvières. Here she and her daughters used to go and pray in the spirit of penance. The outrages nearer home were treated in a similar spirit: expiatory processions in honour of the Immaculate Mother of God were made in the convent for more than a month.

Mother Pelletier's life of devotion to the Queen of heaven finds a parallel only in the devotion and writings of the greatest servants of Mary—St. Bernard, Bossuet, St. Alphonsus Liguori. She did not propagate devotion to our Blessed Lady with her pen like those great writers; but understanding her greatness and her Divine privileges as they did, she gave life to the devotion in her own acts and in the pious practices she enjoined on her Community.

While few men have spoken of Mary's privileges with the same eloquence, the same delicacy of touch as Bossuet, of the part allotted to her in the development of Christianity, few women have propagated practical devotion to our Blessed Lady with so much ardour and confidence as Mother Pelletier.

"She associated herself," says a religious who had been her director, speaking of this devotion, "to every festival of the Church with intense faith and joy. She gladly accepted every new devotion which added lustre to our Blessed Lady's glory, and which was recommended by ecclesiastical authority to the piety of the faithful. I know it made her very happy to erect in the Community a beautiful shrine in honour of our Lady of La Salette. She knew that I had had the happiness of going in pilgrimage to that sacred mountain, and she was very anxious her statue should be as like the original as possible. I remember that in showing me a beautiful photograph which was to be copied for the shrine, she seemed to thrill with joy at the bare idea that she should see our Lady of La Salette,

an exact reproduction of the original statue in the Alpine sanctuary."

Early in 1847 Mother-General paid a visit to Paris for the sake of her daughters there, who were in daily increasing difficulty. They were advised by their Superior, M. de Dreux Brézé, to take in washing from rich Christian families, a plan of which Mother Pelletier (who had in other cases seen disastrous results from such undertakings) strongly disapproved. She thought it not unlikely also that any appearance of competition might excite irritation among Parisian laundresses, for labour itself is often forbidden ground to Communities, owing to the jealousy of the working classes when blinded by passion.

She paid several interesting visits while in Paris: one to Mme. Barat, Superior of the Sacred Heart, which Mme. Perdreau, a religious of the Sacred Heart, afterwards thus described when writing to Angers: "Ever since our holy Foundresses met and gave one another that holy kiss which we think of as the kiss of St. Francis of Assisi and St. Dominic, our two religious families are for ever as united as the Franciscans and Dominicans."

The interview was a conflict of humility, each of the Mothers Foundress striving to be first to kneel at the other's feet and be blessed by her. "It is you who ought to bless me," said Mother Barat, "you who bring back so many souls to the Divine Master." They reciprocally spoke of their troubles, each seeking light and strength from the other.

Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia also visited Mother Javouhey, Foundress of the religious of St. Joseph of Cluny, whose trials in many points not only resembled her own, but even surpassed hers, for she had seen her convent church closed, her religious scattered, had been herself deprived of the Sacraments.

It was probably a relief to Mother Pelletier to unburden her mind to souls such as these, familiar with trials like her own and able to sympathise with her in them, for we can hardly doubt that as a rule she kept the bitterest griefs of her life buried in her own heart, that she might not risk discouraging her daughters. She had undergone much suffering for a year before her visit to Paris. A religious had been brought from Turin with the hope that she would be elected Superior-General, and to further this intention Rome had been invited to annul the last election. This, however, Rome refused to do, asserting its perfect validity. The Sister herself, a very good, pious religious, was meanwhile placed in a most painful predicament. She was made Mistress of Novices for the time, and was invested with every power that could possibly be given her. Her one great comfort was Mother Pelletier herself, who, while apparently ignoring what was being done, would encourage her, help her whenever she could do so with the most delicate charity.

But this was not Mother Pelletier's only trial at this time. An attempt was made to found one House of Refuge opposite the Good Shepherd at Angers, and

another at Saumur, and to place other religious in them.

Matters of this kind were not subjects for discussion among young novices, and while suffering intensely in anticipation of danger to her work Mother Pelletier was always obliged to keep a cheerful countenance. The year was not to close for Mother Pelletier without other painful sacrifices. One of her Assistants, Mother Mary Chantal de la Roche, died. This religious, by her great piety and activity, had largely contributed to the flourishing spiritual condition of the Community. Her death was also a great loss from a temporal point of view, for she was very well off, and gave an income of 10,000 francs to the house, and supplied all the wine required. The preceding year, 1846, had been one of persistent drought; all the crops had perished, and 1847 was consequently a time of scarcity. With an income so much diminished the house was therefore greatly pinched in its domestic economy, and Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, whose hand had ever been open to give, now found herself obliged to ask for a loan. In these temporal difficulties she had as usual recourse to our Blessed Lady. On the feast of the Assumption she assembled the Community, and renewed the vow already made in honour of the Blessed Virgin, adding a promise that on all our Lady's minor feasts for three years, three religious and seven novices should go into Retreat.

The necessity of uniting manual labour to prayer was constantly dwelt upon in Mother Pelletier's spiri-

tual conferences. Her convents were only kept going by the work and earnings of their inmates, and the combination of work and prayer she regarded as essential to their spiritual and temporal prosperity.

"Labour, my dearest daughters," she said, "is, as you know, of Divine institution. God said to Adam, 'Thou shalt eat thy bread in the sweat of thy brow.'

"To live in idleness, to exempt oneself from this hard but just sentence, is permitted to none. All must work in some way or other. This is a thing which our young Sisters should be made thoroughly to understand, and at the same time they should be persuaded that the active life may be perfectly harmonised with the contemplative, and that the soul may rise to the very highest state of contemplation in the midst of much exterior occupation.

"In our Congregation the offices of Mary and Martha must be united: like Martha, we must be able to apply ourselves to exterior things; like Mary, we must never leave the presence of our Divine Master.

"Few religious have ever done so much work as Mother de Chantal. She founded many houses of her Order. Besides frequent journeys, she did work of all kinds in connection with her very important charge, yet she also left many letters and other writings of value which are now her daughters' consolation. There are but few of her houses that cannot boast of possessing some specimen of her handiwork, which are now treasured as relics. They were for the most part

intended for the Sacristy, for to work for the Church and for Altars was her greatest delight.

“Truly interior souls do plenty of work without being embarrassed thereby. St. Teresa was never disturbed, never distracted, though always so busy, and despite whatever difficulties she had to contend with.

“Above all things, avoid such defects. Those who do everything thoughtlessly, without trouble to themselves, do not gain much for Heaven.

“You should be constantly at work according to your capacity and the will of Superiors, and you should never be discouraged even by the thought of your weakness, or of the inferiority of your talents, for you should always remember that all your strength comes from God. There is not one among you who is not capable of rendering us service, of some kind or other, by working in the Lord’s vineyard. Every one is useful—some to dig, some to cultivate the fruits, others to gather them in. Those who spend the whole day in writing, work hard; they comfort souls that need encouraging, revive the zeal and good-will of their Sisters. Those, too, who are in the classes work hard when they really try to fulfil their duties perfectly. Our Sisters in the kitchen and bakery, garden, habit and linen-room, all of them work a great deal. All must strive to do well whatever they do, because all alike dwell in the house of the Lord, and all of us together should unite in contributing to the general welfare of the Community. In the same manner

the Mistresses of needlework should love their work, and must not waste time over it, remembering that the time is not their own, and that when they lose it they are guilty of a fault against holy Poverty.

"I know many of you have foreign-mission work much at heart, especially missions to infidel nations; but remember that if we do not work hard here, if we do not economise here, it will not only be impossible for us to undertake any new works, but we shall not be able to continue those we have already started.

"The ancient monasteries or convents of Egypt were wont to admit nobody who was not willing to do some kind of work. At times several thousand monks were maintained by their own manual labour. There was only one Superior, to whom they gave for the poor whatever they earned.

"It is well known that in harvest-time they used to hire themselves out to farmers, that they might have something to give in alms to the needy."

Mother Pelletier loved holy poverty with a supernatural love, it being one of the vows belonging to her state. She was very particular that her clothes should never be made of finer materials than those of the other nuns. Upon more than one occasion it happened that some of her daughters brought her veils or habits of finer stuff, pleasanter for summer wear than those commonly used. But she always refused them: "You want to send me to Purgatory, I suppose?" she would say. She generally

wore her clothes until they could be worn no longer. Her daughters were always on the watch to mend them for her without her finding it out: sometimes they did it at night. To judge by her dress, a stranger would have taken her for an ordinary religious; there was nothing in her attire, except perhaps greater poverty, to show that she was Superior of the Good Shepherd. Everything she had in use bore the same mark of poverty—the furniture in her room, her books; even her bed was harder and poorer than those provided for others. She had no seat but a straw-chair, and it was often remarked that for the sake of mortifying herself she would never lean back in it. Her daughters tried in vain to get her to accept an arm-chair to sit in while she gave them her prolonged instructions. She would never use any light but a tallow-candle in the long winter evenings she spent in her room, writing her letters, and attending to business matters for the Community. A religious wanted once to give her a Breviary bound in velvet with gilt-edged leaves, but she refused it, knowing it would be contrary to religious simplicity.

She carried the same spirit into the administration of her convent, when it came to a question of spending money for mere ornament. Her daughters said she long reproached herself for having had box planted along the garden paths; she thought it had been money spent uselessly, only to please the eyes. "My daughters," she said, "let us never do that again." She was truly God's steward, using all things as not

belonging to her, and as destined solely to serve for the glory of the Master.

When she spoke of holy poverty to her daughters her language showed her practical knowledge of the subject. "Order and cleanliness are part of the practice of the vow of poverty. Peace and plenty are the offspring of poverty. We find our God in a stable, and there He teaches us every virtue befitting our state. We shall find our foundations in that stable, the source whence all their wealth, all their blessedness are derived. The foundations that were born in the utmost destitution are the very foundations which have now the privilege of affording shelter to the largest number of penitents. This is the kind of blessing that comes of holy poverty when it is allied to unwavering confidence in God.

"The greatest attraction poverty can have for us is as a means of saving more souls. By our economies we can support our existing works and start others. Bishops write from various countries for foundations, but some of these worthy prelates are very poor and without resources, and, in such cases, it behoves us to help them by the scrupulous practice of poverty. You will find all riches in poverty, for he who possesses nothing has all things: God Himself is his portion."

About this time Mother Foundress received news from Canada which comforted her in all her trials. A pestilent disease broke out at Montreal in the spring. The poor Irish especially were attacked by it, and M. Hudon, Superior of the Good Shepherd,

made an appeal to the Sisters' charity on behalf of the sufferers. They lost no time in responding to his suggestions, and, under the direction of their Mother, opened their still unfinished convent to women suffering from famine fever. Hundreds were brought on trucks in the most pitiable condition—often without clothes, covered with sores, screaming with spasms of pain. The Sisters clothed them as best they could with garments belonging to the Community, sometimes even with their aprons. They watched over them, unweariedly succeeding one another; postulants, novices, professed, all vying with each other in the performance of their perilous task. When the work got beyond the Sisters, the penitents took turns as infirmarians, and behaved with admirable devotedness, and the most untiring charity. At last the Superior caught the infection, and her death seemed imminent; and the penitents, alarmed at this misfortune, began to fast and practise other acts of mortification to obtain her recovery; some of them for the same intention promised to amend their lives. Neither the Superior nor any other member of the Community died, which, as 186 deaths took place in the convent among the patients from outside, was regarded as a signal grace.

When the pestilence ceased, the religious celebrated their solemn entrance to their new convent. The Bishop, M. Bourget (whose kindness during the illness of the Superior had been unremitting), established the enclosure, and M. Mainguy, now a Jesuit father, in America, preached a Retreat.

It was the calm that succeeds a storm, and every class in the house rejoiced in it; while to the Sisters themselves it seemed almost a revival of their early days at the Mother House, of which their new convent was an exact copy in its structure.

News of these events, like all news from her missionary daughters, telling of exceptional devotedness under exceptional circumstances in some house of the Good Shepherd beyond the seas, had the doubly consoling effect upon Mother Pelletier of strengthening her conviction that her work was indeed what God would have it to be, and of kindling her love of the Institute to the heights of enthusiasm. She used to pour out to her daughters the zealous yearnings of her heart in such words as these:—

“The longing to do good to others, to extend and increase the glory of God, lifts up the soul to heavenly things. Nothing seems hard to one in whose heart true charity dwells, nothing costs too dear, for charity then becomes the principle of every action—everything is done under its influence. Do we not read in Holy Scripture that “God is charity, and he that abideth in charity abideth in God, and God in him?” (1 St. John iv. 16).

“Observe, my dear daughters, what things missionaries accomplish; how many are their privations; what sufferings they undergo! But, say they, it is well worth while suffering something for the eternal salvation of souls.

“Some of them have travelled day and night on

foot, climbing mountains covered with snow and ice, for months together without rest, going barefoot when their shoes wore out. Some die of fatigue, never satisfied that they have done enough for the missions so dear to their hearts; some are devoured by the savages to whom they are bringing the light of faith and civilisation. For missions great sacrifices must be made; and unless you have great love, great generosity for doing good, you will find it useless to think of work of that kind. A pusillanimous religious, one who is too fond of quiet, who shirks fatigue and contradiction, is unfit for the conquest of souls; she is too narrow-minded for it, too dwarfed in every way. You will have to suffer for souls, my beloved daughters; but remember these words, 'They who instruct many unto justice shall shine as stars for all eternity' (Dan. xii. 3).

"The greater the number of souls you gain for God the greater will be your reward in heaven.

" 'What a martyrdom our vocation is!' a religious once said. She was zealous, fervent, and her soul was as innocent as that of a child. Employed in the penitents' class while yet very young, she won all hearts to God. There was but one girl who had gone very wrong, who persisted in resisting grace, and went so far as to beg the Sister not to pray for her, telling her that she was tormented whenever she did so, and that she was nevertheless resolved to remain just as she was. Of course the only effect of this was to make the religious pray more fervently than ever, and one day,

just after she had approached the holy table, she felt so inflamed with charity for that poor soul that she offered God to take upon herself all the poor child's temptations and to let her have all her own consolations. The penitent immediately felt the effect of this generous prayer, and coming to the religious touched her mantle and said, 'Mother, what are you doing? You are praying for me, and yet you know I do not wish it.' But from that time forth she was a changed being; she would water the ground with her tears, and never again committed a wilful fault.

"But the religious also was changed. She no longer felt like the same person; darkness fell upon her soul, and horrible temptations beset her. Sometimes, just at the moment of Communion, she would go and ask her Superior what she ought to do, and would only approach the holy table out of obedience. This state of habitual interior suffering and anguish lasted until she fell ill of a serious malady of which she eventually died. It was not until shortly before her death that her soul recovered its former calm. 'Oh, how much it costs to redeem a soul!' she cried. She gave her Superiors leave to tell what had happened to her, then entoned *Laudate*, and soon afterwards died.

"Now you are by no means to suppose that I have quoted this example for your imitation. On the contrary, I think that dear Mistress of Penitents, in making herself a victim in such a manner, committed a kind of imprudence. All I want is to show you how far her love of her fourth vow went. Do you, too, love

that fourth vow very dearly? I confess to you, my dear daughters, that the ardour I feel for the salvation of souls burns, devours me. When I think of what doctors do to save the life of the body, of all the studies to which they apply themselves that they may succeed, I accuse myself, I reproach myself for not having laboured as much to save the life of souls, so infinitely more precious than bodies. To do this one must know how to suffer, how to bear privation and great troubles, and to be very patient with our poor children.

“A doctor who attended one of our houses made the following remarks: ‘Every one admires Sisters of Charity; people are, as it were, surprised at all they do, at their devotedness in the fulfilment of their duties. And what,’ he went on to add, ‘what ought not we to say of the holy Order of the religious of the Good Shepherd? With them care for the bodily welfare of those trusted to them is only secondary to that for the soul, which is far more sacred, far more precious. When a poor girl is brought to them, when they have consoled and encouraged her, they have barely begun the work they intend to do. When they have dressed her in suitable garb and made her comfortable, they have next to create, as it were, a new soul in her, a new world, and this is done by teaching and moral care.’

“Again a good Jesuit father said of us, ‘We religious men try to save souls, but have nothing but spiritual care to give; but the religious of the Good Shepherd, besides good advice, bestow upon these

young women the care of mothers, and provide for their physical well-being and maintenance with tender solicitude.'

"Truly, my dear daughters, our duties are no light matter; to fulfil them worthily we need much self-denial, much courage. But the good wish to benefit our neighbour in itself gives the required strength to rise above one's weakness. Where God is truly loved everything is borne with to procure His glory."

The charity set forth in these discourses still animates Mother Pelletier's convents.

The Bishop of Angoulême, M. Regnier, returned from a visit to Rome in December 1847, and, with the voice of one who spoke with authority, told Mother Foundress that her houses in Rome, Genoa, and Nice, by their zeal, had won the esteem and affection of their Superiors. The Bishop of Nice had just enlarged the enclosure of the convent in his Cathedral city. At Angoulême, too, the house was prospering: "The Spirit of God reigns in it," the Bishop said. Such encouraging words as these, coming from her former Superior, were a great help to the Mother.

On St. Francis Xavier's feast, December 3rd, 1847, the religious heard wild cries like those of savages at their convent gate. Ten more Ethiopian negresses had arrived, sent by Father Olivieri, who had bought them in Alexandria, and handed them over to the Superior at Chambéry to be taken to Angers. They had, of course, been redeemed from slavery, and had been brought up in such terror of slave-dealers, and

were so accustomed to hard usage that they were at first very timid. Soon, however, the kindness lavished on them reassured them, and, when they understood that Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia was the Superior, they made eager demonstration of their affection for her.

They were placed in the part of the convent which had been allotted to the other negresses (seven in number) already in the house. At Mother-General's request Mgr. de Hercé came to see and instruct those newly arrived. He taught them the "Our Father" in Arabic, and explained it to them. He read them Arab stories too, and was delighted to find they interested them: "More," they kept repeating, "read us more."

Their religious instruction was completed by the Sisters with the help of the older negress inmates, and watched over with affectionate interest by the Superior. One day they were seen to prostrate themselves before the rising sun in adoration, but upon being told that the sun was nothing but one of the creatures of their God who dwelt in the chapel, they hastened thither, and devoutly pressed their lips to the vestibule walls.

When asked what colour they liked best—white, pink, or ebony black—they answered at once ebony black. The ceremony of their baptism was performed by Mgr. de Hercé in presence of a large congregation of strangers, anxious to witness so edifying a spectacle. The Bishop preached upon the grace of God, which had sought out these poor children in the depths of Ethiopia.

The children's own piety was an enthusiasm of fervour, one of them even wished to lay down her life for our Lord because He died for us. And her prayer seemed to be answered, for, very shortly after her first Communion, she died in her baptismal innocence.

Towards the close of 1847 news came from the convent at Bourges which both consoled Mother Pelletier and greatly touched her. A miracle had been performed there through the intercession of Blessed Germaine Cousin. It was submitted to the Congregation of Rites, and after the usual examination and canonical inquiry, was accepted for the cause of her beatification.

The religious, being in great want, had recommended themselves in their necessity to the Shepherdess of Pibrac; they also hung one of her medals in their granary. Day by day measures of corn were taken out for use without any perceptible diminution of the supply, which latter had been calculated to last two months, but lasted more than three; and one day the Sisters who were kneading, found the dough swelled under their hands until it became as much as if they had put in twelve measures instead of only eight, as had been the case. That day the Mother Superior had asked Blessed Germaine to tell the Sisters in the bakery to set twelve measures, as extra bread was wanted; she had forgotten to tell them herself, and only remembered it during the great silence.

Throughout the whole Institute, and especially in Mother-General, this multiplication of bread awakened

a great devotion to Blessed Germaine. The Order of the Good Shepherd, upon which such a remarkable favour had been bestowed, became henceforward associated to the cause of the Shepherdess Saint's beatification, and the youngest class in the house was henceforth, by Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's orders, known as St. Germaine's Class.

CHAPTER XVI

TRIALS—FOUNDATIONS

1848-1849

Outbreak of riots against the convent—Circular letter from Mother Pelletier—Her strength in bearing crosses—Death of Mme. de Couëspel—Limerick—Aix-la-Chapelle—Saint Louis—Philadelphia—Mgr. de Hercé's death—Annonay—Mother Pelletier's talent for organisation.

THE Good Shepherd, having been founded solely for the relief of the poor, might reasonably have expected to have nothing to fear from popular revolutions. Kindness towards working people, delicate consideration for their feelings, were marked attributes of Mother Pelletier, and, in the following discourse, we find her recommending the like conduct to her daughters :—

“When you are sent for, go quickly, in order to avoid giving cause for impatience or insult. A poor labouring man will sometimes go without his food to get time to come and see his daughter at one of our houses; but, if you keep him waiting, and make him lose his day's wages, how is he to provide bread for his children that evening?

“We ought always to be kind, very kind to labouring people.”



Dubut, à Angers.

EGLISE DU BON PASTEUR DE ST-LOUIS.

One day, in 1848, when Angers was seething with revolution, a tumultuous mob assembled beneath the windows of the Good Shepherd, shouting, "Down with the nuns!" impelled probably by that brutal instinct which often makes evildoers turn against those to whom they owe nothing but good, to visit on them the crimes others have committed. Holy and innocent lives seem a provocation to the wicked, perhaps because they are a living condemnation of their own crimes.

At the noise of this tumult an elderly gentleman, very distinguished looking, but wearing traces of some deep grief, showed himself, and thus addressed the mob: "Friends," he said, "why have you come here to insult pious women, whose lives are given wholly to the relief of the sufferings of their brethren? Listen to me! I lost my son, and to relieve my sorrow, and especially that of my wife, to whom the outer world has become an insupportable sight, the kind Superior of the Good Shepherd has opened her doors to us, and allows us to live in the out-quarters of her monastery."

These words, spoken with feeling, found their way to the hearts of those to whom they were addressed, the uproar ceased, the crowd quietly dispersed.

The son of whose death M. de Colbert spoke had been killed out shooting, and Mme. de Colbert, in the agony of her grief, had sought refuge at St. Florent de Saumur. Hearing that she was there, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, with that responsive sympathy, that

touching grace of consolation with which she always met the afflicted, sent to Saumur all that was necessary for the guest's comfort, then offered her rooms in the outquarters of her own convent.

In 1848 several monasteries became the prey of popular hatred, and Mother-General feared the house at Angers would be either burnt down or sacked. But from the very quarter whence danger seemed most imminent came protection. M. Bordillon, just about this time, was appointed Prefect of Angers. He had been worsted in a lawsuit against the Good Shepherd in 1842, since which time he had harassed the convent with underhand attacks. No sooner, however, had his appointment taken place than his feelings changed. He came at once to Mother-General, assured her of his friendliness and favour, and posted, near the convent, a guard of fifty soldiers and fifty national guards, which remained there until the agitation subsided.

But disquieting news came from other places. Religion, however manifested, but especially when it takes the form of convents like the Good Shepherd, where souls are brought to God and snatched away from sin, has the effect of exciting the worst passions of evildoers.

The convent at Bourg was attacked, on 26th February, by a strong band and sacked; the cloisters were destroyed, the windows broken, the furniture, linen, and provisions stolen. The religious themselves, assailed with threats, were obliged to assume lay clothes and

disperse to hiding-places with the Magdalens and penitents, who refused to leave their beloved Mothers.

When news of these painful events reached Mother-General, she wrote to the religious telling them where they were to go, still cherishing the hope of their eventual return to Bourg. This, however, was impossible from the heated state of popular feeling, and it was finally found necessary to sell the house, that fold of the Good Shepherd where many souls had been rescued and saved.

Hardly had news of events at Bourg reached Mâcon, than a mob, consisting of labourers, led by men of desperate character, threatened the Good Shepherd in that town with similar treatment. In vain the proprietor of the convent, the chaplain, the benefactors appealed for protection to the municipality. Fears prevailed, and the Mayor sent to say the convent doors were to be opened, and that the religious had better leave. The Preservation children and penitents were also sent away, some to a charitable institution with a few of their mistresses, others to their homes. It was sad to see their distress at being parted from the Mothers, and, for a long time, the religious hoped to return to Mâcon. But it became, at length, evident that the field of labour there was closed to them, and the thirteen religious, forty-eight penitents, and forty-five Preservation children, who had inhabited the house, were finally dispersed.

Italy was also in a revolutionary ferment. The Jesuits and religious of the Sacred Heart had been

expelled. It was reported at Genoa that the Mother House had been sacked, and an order was sent to the religious one evening to leave their convent. Hastily gathering together their most precious possessions, they started, with broken hearts, for France, halting at Antibes to await orders from Mother-General as to their future destination. They were the guests, at Antibes, of M. Courrin, father of their Superior.

On the 7th March the house at Genoa was sacked, and all subsequent attempts of the religious to return were frustrated—others had taken possession; and, when they did return in 1857, it was to new quarters.

On the 25th March, the convent at Dôle, in consequence of the threatening attitude of the populace, was closed. The religious, in disguise, escaped, under the protection of the National Guard. The creditors of the house sold the furniture. It was a year before this monastery could be re-established.

The convent at Lyons, situated at Les Batières, although much menaced, escaped dissolution, thanks, doubtless, to our Lady of Fourvières. It was attacked, at 8 P.M., on the 27th February, by a band of workmen, calling themselves the "Devourers," whose idea was to make themselves masters of the city. By the admirable courage of the convent chaplain, M. Valadier, they were persuaded to go away, but, it being rumoured they intended to return on the following day, M. Valadier asked for a guard. This was refused officially, but the surrounding peasants undertook to defend the house from the incendiarism with which it was

threatened. Absurd stories, such as are generally circulated in revolutionary times, were told about the convent; it was said members of the Royal family were harboured there, and M. Arago, the Government Commissary, proceeded to search it; but nothing was found, and the religious were henceforth left in peace. Several of the Sisters from Bourg were with them.

It now became Mother Pelletier's aim to minimise, so far as possible, the ill effects of the tempest which had ravaged her houses. Assembling her Council, on the 29th March, after seeking the light of the Holy Ghost, she drew up a circular letter containing practical advice applicable to the evil days through which the convents were passing.

Her first recommendation to her daughters was to preserve their houses, to put on lay dress if the habit excited irritation, to remain in the convent as seculars, to earn their living there by cultivating the ground if they could not stay as religious charged with the education of young girls; to seek, and always faithfully carry out, the advice of ecclesiastical Superiors, that their houses might at any cost be preserved.

But if, in spite of all precautions, they were nevertheless expelled, she reminded them that the house at Angers was their Mother House, and that there they would ever find a Mother and Sisters who loved them, and would ever be ready to share everything with them.

There is a postscript to the circular letter sent to the Superioress at Saumur, written in Mother Pelletier's own hand. "Is there any sorrow like my sorrow?

Pray for your dear Congregation, for your poor, your loving Mother!" On the 28th April she wrote to the Superioress at Munich:—

"FROM OUR MUCH AFFLICTED MOTHER HOUSE.

" 'Lord, save us—we perish!'

"Our Divine Master sleeps in the depths of our tempest-tossed bark, my beloved daughter. To describe to you the extent of our misfortunes were impossible.

"Alas, my dear child, I have not breathing time. I have not been able to write even to you, who have been more kind, more devoted than ever. Even your letters are more open than they used to be. The Church is in the depths of grief—Rome, our Holy Father the Pope, France, Sardinia, alas! Ah, if you are still undisturbed, may you continue so! My beloved daughters, we pray very much for you. Angers is Mary's town. Your Sion is calmer than ever, and is respected and beloved by all shades of opinion. But the tribes of Sion are no more; her virgins are wanderers and scattered; their temples and houses are sacked, plundered, destroyed by fire. Our poor Sisters arrive here without even bread. Oh! how it grieves us!

"There are several hundreds of us here without work or gifts, and deprived of benefactors; but we have great peace and perfect union. Already four hundred penitents have been driven out of our houses; we have lost 500,000 francs, have been robbed, have suffered loss by fire; sixty of our professed have been sent into exile; day and night they arrive here.

“The obedience, the humility of our Sisters here would deeply touch you. Torrents of tears are shed, but peaceful ones. I have never to utter one word of severity; but oh, what anxious times! Oh, my God! come to our aid. Thanks be to God, order and observance are perfect. Our Lady truly watches over us. The choir and music are excellent; our gardens and farm are the best in this country.”

Mother Pelletier traced all suffering to its source in the Providence of God, and a whole series of misfortunes, like those of the year 1848, was necessary to draw out the full beauty of her supernatural courage. Here is one of her instructions to the Community:—

“The year that has just closed, my dear daughters, has been a year of suffering for us, but a year also of improvement. Like the cedars of Lebanon we have been stricken with the axe and tried, but only that we may both grow and renew our strength. It is good for a religious Order to be thus tried from time to time that its life may be quickened, its fervour maintained.

“St. Vincent of Paul thought it a misfortune for either a Congregation or person to have nothing to suffer. St. Ignatius thought so too. One day it was remarked that he seemed very sad; he was asked the reason. ‘I am afraid,’ he replied, ‘that in one of our provinces there has been some infidelity, which has made it unworthy to share in the Passion of Jesus Christ our Lord, for so far it has had no cross.’

“Another day he seemed unusually cheerful, and

when asked the reason, said, 'I am glad because our Lord has deigned to appear to me, and He promises me, in answer to my prayer for it, that the Society shall never cease to enjoy the precious heritage of His Cross in the contradictions, the persecutions it shall meet with everywhere.'

"Observe, my dear daughters, that from its very origin our holy Order has been always tried by affliction. For ten years our first Mothers had no novices. They certainly were not fed with milk, honey, and butter all that time, for their crosses were then many and heavy. And, as you see, the Father of the family comes sometimes to sow the same seed among us. Nay, more; not content with casting here and there a seed of that suffering which is the lot of all whom He loves best, so He buries us deep in the land planted with it, causing us to undergo persecution and calumny, so that the root of humility may take such hold in us that we may spring up higher, spread out our branches farther, and bring forth more fruits of our holy vocation. God has great designs for our Institute, but only by the way of the Cross shall we reach their fulfilment.

"We must, then, live in God and for God, wholly consecrated to Him; and for us this is easy and necessary. Easy, as you will see, if you consider that all our actions, even the very least, tend by the virtue and intention of our holy Rule to lift us up to God. Necessary; this all of you understand far better than I can explain; some of you know it experimentally

now. The works which cost us so many sighs, so much labour, for which we sacrifice our days and the whole of our lives, are they not unfortunately criticised, opposed, even slandered? If they do not seem prosperous we run the risk of being accused of imprudence; we are supposed to want common sense; our enemies deride us. And, in point of fact, should not we be indeed fools if we acted from any other motive than to please God? Ah! let us ever live in such a manner that in all confidence we may say, 'I live by God, I act for God alone.'

"A young religious whose heart was full of these feelings, in the fervour of her affection composed a hymn in which every one of the twenty-four verses ended with this refrain—

'I live for God, I live in Him;
Oh, what bliss!
And everywhere His heaven I find.'

"You are stationed on the Mount of Calvary, my dear daughters, and from that height you should learn the secret of strength, that the injustice of men may not terrify you; their injustice is indeed cruel, and is not unfrequently a stumbling-block to the just."

The year 1848 was one of great trial to the Good Shepherd. As the home of penitent souls it was doubtless peculiarly obnoxious to the spirit of evil, and the full force of his fury raged against it. All the Italian houses were in great danger, particularly those at Rome.

Mother Pelletier's final trial in this year, the one she felt perhaps most of all, was the death of Sister Mary Teresa of Jesus de Couëspel, who had been her support, her counsellor in all her difficulties, and had bravely upheld in the Roman courts, the rights of the Institute to which she had devoted herself and her fortune.

In youth accustomed to meet difficulties of no ordinary kind, and naturally upright and energetic, she had made a brave stand for the independence of her Community, but, in doing so, had aroused the animosity of her opponents. At her death the Sisters, upon this account, thought it more prudent to refrain from publishing the story of a life so full of deeds of self-devotion.

To Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, the death of this courageous Assistant, just at a time when fresh dangers of every kind were surging around her convents, was almost too great a shock, and, for a time, it seemed as if her health would fail beneath the blow.

"My soul is crushed," she wrote on the 11th November to the Superior at Namur. "I weep day and night. Although I am resigned to God's will, I feel, nevertheless, an overwhelming sorrow. I mourn for a daughter of exceptional holiness, affection, and loyalty. Could you but realise the support I found in her! I shall never be able to find her equal in this world!"

Mother de Couëspel had fulfilled in religion all Mgr. Flaget's expectations. Ever since she first left

Angers, in 1838, to be Second Assistant at Rome, her work had been wondrously prolific in good results. There is not one of her letters which does not bear evidence of her affection for Mme. Pelletier. The following was written from Rome only a few days after their first parting:—

“My beloved Mother, these days of sharp pain, these farewells, this anxiety about the long journey, the thought that we are separated, and perhaps for ever in this world—is this then the road to heaven! I cannot believe that your charity has really left. In spite of myself I think you are still in Rome. I run, saying to myself, ‘There is our Mother.’ But alas! she is not here. And then come tears, and I do not know when I shall be comforted. But Thou, O Lord, be my peace and my consolation.”

Mother Pelletier possessed the gift, so valuable in Superior, that of understanding how to turn to account the various talents of their subjects. Mother de Couëspel, after being Assistant at Rome, was sent to Nice (where she founded the Good Shepherd), and afterwards to Genoa, Turin, and Paris. She was then recalled to the Mother House to be Second Assistant, and in that office became the unflinching defender of the Rules and Constitutions of her Order. Her position at Angers becoming on this account very difficult, it was thought advisable to remove her, and she was sent to Amiens as Superior, where she remained but one year, and then Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, finding it impossible to do without her strong support

and sound judgment, again recalled her to the Mother House. Her death was not only a sorrow to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, but for the Community, it was the loss of a valiant defender.

Many as were the trials of this unfortunate year, it was not without its consolations for Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia. Two new foundations were made in 1848—one at Limerick in Ireland, the other at Aix-la-Chapelle in Germany. Ireland, which was afterwards to give so many vocations to the Good Shepherd, obtained its first foundation under peculiarly providential circumstances.

Miss Reddan, a pious energetic Catholic, who had held the direction of a house of refuge in Limerick for over twenty years, felt called to religion in the Order of the Sisters of Mercy. Her Bishop opposed her design, representing to her that it would be inevitable ruin to the important work dependent on her.

Miss Reddan, however, happening to visit London, became acquainted with the Good Shepherd convent at Hammersmith; she was edified by the piety and order reigning there, and the idea of handing her own house over to religious of the Order occurred to her. The Bishop approved; application was made to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, who soon sent religious, for she loved Ireland, the country which, poor as it is, sends out thousands of missionaries, and largely contributes to the extension of the Catholic religion.

Miss Reddan stayed with the Sisters until they had settled to their new work, and wished to enter



Convent of the Good Shepherd, Limerick, Ireland.

the Order of the Good Shepherd. But she had been called elsewhere, and became, as she had originally proposed, a Sister of Mercy. Eventually she went out to be a missionary in California, and died there with a reputation for great sanctity. The house at Limerick became a very prosperous foundation, and, from time to time, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia sent over more Sisters to meet its increasing needs. In addition to the penitents' class, the Sisters established an industrial school under Government patronage. The rapid growth of the work, the piety reigning in the house, awakened Mother-General's special interest in the convent.

At Aix the wish was expressed to have a Novitiate attached to the foundation asked for. But when Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia refused, fearing the dangers that might attend the premature division of her novices, the point was waived, the need for a refuge of the Order being strongly felt. For Superioress she chose Sister Mary of St. Euphrasia Fey, a religious of great merit, whose birthplace was Aix, and whose virtues were known there. For these reasons, and from the position her family held in the town, her ministry was begun under very advantageous circumstances. The house attracted general interest, not merely in Aix itself, among clergy and laity, but among the bishops of the Rhenish Provinces, who desired to have foundations in their dioceses.

The house was scarcely founded when visitors of high ecclesiastical station came to see the religious

engaged in their sublime work. The first year, the Bishops of Luxembourg and Munster, the Vicars-General of Liège and Trêves came. Another visitor was Dr. Briss, a very good man, who had just brought the Sisters of St. Vincent de Paul to Freiburg-in-Brigau. A lady belonging to Liège, the sister of Father Bellefroid, S.J., also came. She was director of a refuge in Liège, and, recognising several of the penitents as having been formerly under her care, was struck by their quiet modest appearance.

At Aix, and throughout the Rhenish Provinces, the praises of the new Institute resounded everywhere. At a general meeting of the benefactors of the work, it was resolved that the Hall of Conferences should be adorned with portraits of Mother Foundress, and M. de Neuville, and with two other pictures, one of the city of Angers, the other of the Mother House. The Order thus quickly took root in a soil ever fertile in good works, and in time bore abundant fruit in conversions and vocations.

Mgr. Regnier was anxious that the house at Angoulême should be enlarged, and, with this object in view, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia started, in severe January weather in 1849, on a journey, which was attended with many consolations, both to herself and her daughters at Angoulême, Poitiers, and St. Florent de Saumur, where she paid passing visits. In each of her convents she seemed to belong wholly to the religious by whom she was for the time entertained. She was received with tears of joy; then

confidences were poured into her ears—of joys and sorrows—she, meanwhile, sympathising without effort with each one, so that her visit brought with it the Divine blessing. It was not only her religious who rejoiced in her presence; all who were interested in them had a share in their joy.

She arrived at the Bishop's Palace in Angoulême at 6 A.M. . The Bishop was already in the Cathedral, and his cook wanted to show her into the drawing-room to wait for him. "No! my good Mary," she said, "I should prefer, if you please, to go and warm myself by your kitchen-fire."—"Ah!" said the cook, "something told me that if our Mother got here very early in the morning she would do me that honour, and I have a fire fit for a Queen ready for her."

All the servants were on the watch to catch sight of the Mother, and at a signal from the cook came in. She was so kind, so full of delicate thoughtfulness for everybody, that she delighted them all. She had brought little presents for each—for one a watch, for another a silk handkerchief, and each thanked her, adding with these words: "It is just what I wanted most."

After hearing the Bishop's Mass, she went to her daughters' house, who received her with almost speechless joy; in the penitents' class also her reception was very touching.

A few hours later, Mgr. Regnier and his two Vicars-General arrived at the convent for a clothing. The Bishop gave an address, and referred to the humble

beginnings of the Order, and his own share in them. He also spoke with self-congratulation of the convent in his diocese, rejoicing in possessing an offshoot of the great tree which, he said, would soon stretch forth its branches over the whole earth.

The Lady Patronesses of the house came to the ceremony in large numbers, anxious to see the Mother and get her to bless their children. More came than the Chapel could hold. Some threw themselves at the Mother's feet and begged her blessing, which was a great trial to her humility.

On her return journey she stayed at Poitiers, where she met with the same kind of reception from the Lady Patronesses. She read them a letter from Rome in which Cardinal Patrizi sent, together with the Holy Father's blessing for her Community, special favours to all patrons of the work. Several copies of this letter were made, and were sent to absent Lady Patronesses by the Abbé de Larnay.

Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia had the happy gift of gracious speech, borrowed often from Holy Scripture. "At Angoulême I have found Bethania, Avila at Poitiers. You are my joy!" said she to her daughters when parting from them.

At St. Florent, before she had time to get out of the coach, she saw four of the five orphan sisters whom in former days she had received from their dying Mother's arms and placed in the convent boarding-school. They were waiting for her, and ran to meet her with smiling faces. "Do you remember,"

said one, "how good you always were to little Clementina? Whenever I had done anything naughty I used to fly to your arms for refuge."

When it became known that Mother-General was there, those owing her a debt of gratitude, former penitents and Preservation children, came to see her, and with twenty of such persons about her she still remembered the name of each, questioned each about her life, asked all to be sure and come to her whenever they wanted her. Her passage among them was a triumph of charity.

Meanwhile, from the convent at Louisville in America, Mgr. Flaget was sending forth four religious, in virtue of letters of obedience given in Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's name, to found a house at St. Louis on the Mississippi. This town was known as the most pious of those regions, and at that time, with a population of 30,000 inhabitants, possessed seven churches and several Communities. The Archbishop awaited the arrival of the religious with anxious expectation; but it being the month of January, it seemed probable they would be detained by the ice. The Sisters, however, promised the holy souls Masses for their safe journey, and this being accomplished, the Archbishop only waited until their chapel was in a fit state to come for five consecutive days to say the Masses himself.

The convent was established in a house bequeathed for the purpose by M. Cellini, late Vicar-General. The same venerable Priest had left with the house two

negro slaves—a man who was gardener, and a woman who was cook. The Archbishop bought an adjoining house and garden, which were added to the premises, and here Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's daughters began their work with good hope of an abundant harvest.

In the following June Mother-General supplemented their work by sending out more Sisters from Angers. These Sisters, after they crossed the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico, had still before them a journey of 700 leagues on the Mississippi. Their letters to Mother-General describe a violent tempest, and the terrible waterspout they saw in the Gulf of Mexico, the tropical heat they endured on the river, the muddy water they were obliged to drink, and all the other trials of a journey, part of which lay through a district scarcely civilised; but they told also of their happiness in fulfilling a mission dear to the Good Shepherd. They felt already that St. Louis would be a bright jewel in their Mother's crown.

Only a few months after this foundation was made more religious were sent from Angers to found another American house. The Bishop of Philadelphia, Mgr. Francis Patrick Kenrick, brother of the Archbishop of St. Louis, had followed his example, and sent a petition to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia for religious in his diocese. She had not funds for all the works that crowded upon her, and by the interest of the Bishop of Philadelphia 1600 francs were sent her by the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, for the foundation in

his diocese. Time, however, being required to make the necessary arrangements for sending religious from Angers to America, the Bishop applied to Mgr. Flaget to send one or two nuns in the meantime from his diocese to prepare and open the house in Philadelphia. To refuse a service was always difficult to Mgr. Flaget, and on his return from Baltimore, where the seventh Council had just been held, he retraced his steps in order to accompany the Sisters to their destination. The Council was not yet dissolved, and in passing through the city of Baltimore the Sisters' zeal for their mission was stirred by seeing the assembled Fathers, among whom were two Archbishops, twenty-three Bishops, and sixty Priests.

Having reached Philadelphia and opened their house for penitent women, they immediately wrote a Community letter to Mother Foundress. It gave a minute account of the many graces and favours the Sisters had received from God and from man; it seemed to them that the good dispositions shown by the inhabitants of Philadelphia was the sign of a special Providence over them and their work.

As we know, they had learnt from their Mother that religion of gratitude which she so eminently practised, following the example of our Lord, in the Holy Gospel, whom we find more often making acts of thanksgiving than of petition. She had, moreover, taught them the great Christian truth, that having in ourselves no right to anything whatsoever, we owe thanks for all we receive. In Mother Mary of St.

Euphrasia gratitude, that virtue of noble souls, was instinctive; to say "Thank you" was always her first impulse.

In the year 1849 Mother-General lost two of her friends and protectors by death, Mgr. Guitton of Poitiers and Mgr. de Hercé of Nantes. In the latter especially she lost the devoted patron, the constant friend, the comforter who had never failed her in the hour of her need. It had been his intention to retire to end his days at the Good Shepherd, and he had hoped that his remaining strength might there be employed in the service of the foreign religious, the English, Germans, and Italians. He had chosen the rooms he was to have, and had promised to pay a certain sum for his board and that of his man-servant. But the clergy of his diocese absolutely refused to hear of his leaving them.

The following lines were written by Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia to the Superior at Poitiers about Mgr. Guitton's death:—

"A terrible blow has fallen on us. *Fiat!* Oh, my God! And what a blow for the important diocese of Poitiers! And for you, my daughter, for you too, what a loss!"

As the Institute spread so did the spirit of habitual prayer grow in Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia. She was constantly inculcating on her daughters the duty of expiatory prayer, that most essentially Catholic, that noblest form of intercessory prayer. When she heard of the sacrileges committed by the Roman

people in the Holy City she at once ordered that the Community should every Friday make an act of reparation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It was begun on the feast of the Sacred Heart, 15th June 1849, and, while strengthening the piety of the whole Community, these beautiful devotions strengthened the Mother's heart for every trial.

"I have often told you, my daughter," wrote Mgr. Regnier to her, on Christmas Day 1849, "that I share all your anxieties, all your tribulations, all your distresses. I beseech our Lord that it may please Him to sweeten the bitterness of your cup; but if it be His holy will that you should still drink it, I beg Him that it may tend to your sanctification."

In the following year this good Bishop, the counsellor of the Foundress, the friend of the Order, was moved from his see at Angoulême, and made Archbishop of Cambrai. In the same year he offered the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in the chapel of the Good Shepherd at Angers, on the feast of the Sacred Heart.

Friends multiplied around the Order and Foundress. At Rome Cardinal Patrizi was still its indefatigable defender with the Pope and Cardinals. In England Cardinal Wiseman was taking steps to introduce more foundations, and in several French dioceses eminent ecclesiastics were evincing growing interest in the work.

Among the latter, special mention must be made of M. André Bechetoille, a venerable Canon, who, with

the approval of his Bishop, Mgr. Guibert, obtained a foundation for Annonay. There was at first some difficulty in finding suitable quarters for it, but in time, through M. Bechetoille's own boundless charity and that of his cousin, Mdle. Louise Duret, a large and beautiful monastery was built, in which, for the remainder of his days, M. Bechetoille acted as chaplain.

We have an account of the erection of this foundation in the following letter, written by Mother Mary of the Divine Heart Lionnet, a native of Annonay:—

“In 1847 Canon Bechetoille, who had formerly been my confessor, came to see me at Avignon, and with him we talked over the establishment of a foundation at Annonay, for which he was to be responsible. He is a Priest wholly given to good works, and has some means.

“The work was delayed by the Revolution of 1848, but is now to commence. By our Mother's orders I went to Annonay, a few weeks ago, and was most hospitably entertained by the religious of the Sacred Heart. It seemed strange to be in my own country and with my family after ten years' absence. M. Bechetoille wanted to have me sent to make the foundation; but it is a post I could never have filled. ‘No one is a prophet in his own country.’ The house has been bought. May I, at least, have done some good to the town of my birth by having been employed in this work of salvation.”

Mother Lionnet was one of those daughters of Mother Pelletier who seemed to have caught most of

her own spirit of zeal for souls. Highly refined by nature, she possessed a rich imagination and great literary talents; she was also clever at composing poetry, and often wrote cantatas for festivals at Angers. Her vocation was strikingly supernatural. She had been a pupil at the Sacred Heart and felt called to the Good Shepherd; but it was in opposition to the wishes of her family that she entered the Order.

She spent the first few years of her life as a professed at the Mother House, and clung to Mother Pelletier as a Saint, ardently admiring her virtues.

"Obedience works miracles," she wrote in 1845. "Our Mother said to me, 'Work for the redemption of negro women, and for their salvation.' Confiding in her words, I wrote letters to Italy and England, and to all the most notable financiers in Paris, and money is coming in from all sides for the redemption of slaves. I have had letters from the great O'Connell and from the Marquis Pallavicini in Genoa. They have deigned to answer a poor little nun who appealed to them in the name of charity."

She was made Superior of the convent at Avignon in spite of her timidity, and left the Mother House and Foundress with a sad heart.

"We left Angers on the 10th November at 3 A.M.," she writes in her journal. "We had bade our Sisters good-bye the night before, and our very honoured Mother had given us her blessing (to me and the assistant whom I took with me). Great was our surprise, therefore, when in the night we saw our

revered Mother; she had come from her room to bless us again before we left.

“‘You are sacrificing yourself for the Institute,’ she said, ‘and how should I not come to bless you once more?’ For a long, long time I shall treasure the sweet perfume of that last kiss of my Mother.”

Mother Mary of the Divine Heart came back to Angers for a visit five years later, and heard more of those words from her Mother’s lips which had such marvellous power, giving her courage, and stirring up her zeal. “I have just returned from our dear Mother House,” she wrote in June 1850. “The offering I carried there was the foundation at Annonay. Our revered Mother-General pressed me to her heart; she has given me courage for a long time. I am her Sister Mary of the Divine Heart, her dearest daughter. Those are her own words, spoken and written. I shall ever keep in my heart the remembrance of all her goodness.”

In 1854 the founder of the house at Annonay, good Canon Bechetoille, paid Angers a visit. “I am setting out for Jerusalem,” he told the religious who had spoken to him often of the marvels of their Sion, as they loved to call the Mother House. He came back with the warmest admiration for all he had seen, for the piety and order reigning there, as it did everywhere where Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia ruled.

Nothing escaped her vigilance. Every now and then she would pay a visit to the kitchen to see that the food was properly prepared and cooked, and that

the meat was good. She delighted in the healthy bright faces she saw in the classes. Everything that taught her daughters habits of economy and order she thought important, and, with this in view, she established a separate temporal administration in each class, every one of which was to try to be self-maintaining with a separate purse of its own, out of which at the end of the month the mistress was to pay into the general fund on behalf of those under her care. Under this system the girls of each class acquired a strong family feeling, and tried heartily not only to be a self-supporting section of the Community, but to lay by funds for hard times when work might be scarce, or to meet the wear and tear of daily life. One of the classes managed so well that, upon one occasion, they paid into the Community fund out of their savings enough to buy a new kind of lamp which consumed much less oil than the old one. Presents of this sort from one class gave the greatest mutual pleasure both to givers and receivers. Once Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia asked some of the penitents to help her in a work of charity, they were asked each to give her five sous and earn them by working over hours. The suggestion was eagerly carried out.

She left each mistress absolute freedom in the direction of the class belonging to her, a mark of confidence which had the effect of quickening the mistresses' zeal and of strengthening their authority.

She delighted in showing visitors whom she respected over the workrooms, where the classes under

their respective mistresses were occupied. All these young girls, busy at their work, praying or singing hymns, suggested the idea of a Christian colony, where the members gained their livelihood at the same time as they sanctify their soul.

A person who saw the work, and came away impressed with the conviction that Mother Pelletier's gifts of organisation were supernatural, said it was not possible that such houses, living edifices as they may well be called, could have risen all over the world without visible resources, had a mere human agency been at work. The work of the Holy Ghost was manifestly there.

"To say that Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's foundations and work prove her sanctity is but the bare truth. How did one woman who had none of the ordinary means of consolidating her authority found 110 monasteries? A task so marvellous could never have been accomplished without that supernatural aid which God reserves for certain chosen souls, in order to make manifest His Divine mercies. The graces she received were, therefore, graces of predilection; and these she did not bury, she put them out at interest that they might yield a hundred-fold. It was necessary to be a saint to succeed without temporal help, armed only with confidence in God. Whenever she sent out her daughters to a new foundation this confidence shone forth: 'Go,' she would say, 'go, my daughters, I have neither gold nor silver to give you; but what I have I give you.

Go, in the Name of the Good Shepherd; go, and conquer souls for Jesus Christ.'

"The monuments she has left are still with us to bear witness to the truth of her words, and show that God was with her. Those 110 monasteries which she governed peacefully for forty years, and with a facility little short of the marvellous, still exist. From the depths of her convent at Angers she gently ruled over the hearts and minds of all, as well as over her numerous foundations."

CHAPTER XVII

SPIRIT OF PRAYER—JOURNEYS—FOUNDATIONS

1850

Spirit of prayer—Charity of Mother Pelletier and her daughters—
Journey to Sens—St. Savinian—Dalbeth, Glasgow—Fame of
the Good Shepherd—Misserghin near Oran.

IN the calm and strength which proceeded from habitual union with our Lord, Mother Pelletier governed her convents, and transacted the temporal business which fell to her lot in so large a share. None of the occupations of her state robbed her of the sense of the Divine Presence; all her days were but a prolonged prayer.

In order to appreciate the part prayer held in her own life, one must see the importance she ascribed to it for a religious of the Good Shepherd. It was a subject to which she never wearied of returning in conversing with her daughters, a practice she was ever recommending in order to show them clearly why they, even more than others, should never fail in it.

“My dear daughters,” said she, in one of these conferences, “be very ardent, very zealous for the salvation of souls; and, on that account, love prayer very much, love Holy Communion, for where will you

find the graces necessary for the fulfilment of your missions, if not in Him who is the author of all grace? The more truly a religious is animated with the spirit of her vocation, the more also does she love prayer and meditation.

“Remember that prayer ought to be our preparation for approaching the Sacrament of love; and, in that Sacrament, we should inflame our hearts with the spirit of prayer, whence we shall receive every grace we need for our sanctification, and that of the souls confided to us. Would it not then be truly deplorable if we, who ought to be more given than others to prayer, should neglect it on account of temptations or interior difficulties? Should not this be rather the greater reason for us to come to our God, who is the God of peace, the God of all consolation?

“The devil knows how to plan his attacks. He knows that a religious without prayer can never have strength to labour for souls, and so he is always trying to prevent our praying. Generally nothing but great fidelity in prayer will deliver us from our spiritual troubles and anxieties; and the same fidelity makes us worthy of heavenly grace.

“Recollection makes prayer easy, and prayer makes recollection easy. Let it then be a matter of conscience with you to keep silence in the prescribed hours. How can you expect to make your meditation well if you spend the day in gossip and ill-regulated thought? And when your evening meditation is finished, you ought to watch faithfully over yourselves, and try,

by not forgetting that you have been conversing with God, to keep your souls prepared for that of the morning.

“Very often, moreover, the apparent difficulty of prayer is a mere illusion proceeding from the spirit of darkness, who dreads nothing so much as our holding converse with God. At times it is a snare our own sloth has laid for us. We dread trouble, and above all, mental trouble. There are plenty of people who would like to pray without taking any pains to keep recollected, or making the slightest effort of any kind. Confidence in God is the one means to make rapid progress. If sometimes you feel dumb before God, and know not what to say to Him, it is perhaps because you are wanting in filial confidence towards Him.

“Each time you begin to pray you should say to yourself that you are responding to God’s own invitation, and that He is willing to give you every grace, every light you need, to enable you to pray well. If you have to bear dryness and aridity, if you find it difficult to set your interior faculties to work, these may be trials that God sends, and all you have to do is to bear them patiently, keeping very humbly at His feet, and assuring Him you only desire what He may please. And, above all, remember that to run away from humiliations, crosses, sufferings, is to run away from prayer.

“Remember that where humility is not, there the spirit of prayer is not. The Holy Ghost tells us that pride keeps us far from God.

“If, therefore, you would pray well, be humble and be on your guard against idle thoughts. These are the two things essential for you, for all. Recollection and humility are the foundations of prayer as they are also its food.

“For more than fifteen years St. Teresa was subject to dryness in prayer. She tells us she would have suffered less from martyrdom than she did when she tried to recollect herself for meditation. She had a sand-glass with which she used to measure the time for prayer, and she used often to shake it, the time seemed so long. Sometimes she used to catch herself counting the panes of glass in the windows, or the tiles in the floor, instead of praying; and, what was worse still, the demon with his cunning tried to make her believe that a sinner like her should be satisfied with reciting the Office, and saying vocal prayers, and leave meditation alone. When the bell rang for meditation she would sometimes run away and hide herself in the garden, as if to withdraw from our Lord’s presence; but all the time she was very unhappy to be far from Him whom her soul loved.

“In these times of aridity she used often to say to God, ‘Lord, the more you hide yourself from my soul the more will I run after you.’ Sometimes she took up a book, and found that reading did her good.

“You will learn by experience that the only way of learning how to pray well is by praying. This is why, whenever any of the disciples of St. John of the Cross came and asked him to teach them how to pray,

he used generally only to answer, '*Pray; make your meditation.*' And I myself feel inclined to make no other answer to those who question me."

"Prayer is a secret audience granted to us by God, in which He manifests Himself to us to fill us with His grace; but, dearest daughters, believe me, no one can initiate you into this close communion of the soul with God, no one can teach you what the creature ought to say to the Creator. It behoves you earnestly to beg of God to teach you how to converse with Him; it is for you to try and make yourselves worthy of that grace. Prepare yourselves perpetually by a great fidelity in all your duties, and then come into the Presence of your Divine Saviour in all the simplicity of your soul. Listen to His voice when He speaks to your heart and tells you to correct this fault or that, when He suggests to you this sacrifice or that. Ask Him to pardon all your faults; thank Him for His numberless blessings; beg Him for new graces for yourself, for others, for your Sisters on the missions. Make all the use you can of your understanding, your memory, your will; above all, excite your heart to love, gratitude, and generosity. In a word, your prayer should be one of zeal and self-denial, a prayer of sacrifice.

"When you are assembled for prayer it seems to me as if a fountain were opened, which spreads its streams on all sides, and some receive more, some less, according to the recollection and the particular dispositions of each. Stoop under these streams, so that

they may flow more abundantly over you; gather them up, too, as much as you can; treasure them, let them revive in you the spirit of holiness, the spirit of zeal proper to the sublime vocation to which it has pleased God to call you.

“Prayer assists us always to form sound judgments and to come to decisions regulated by prudence. A religious of our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, however young she may be, should apply herself carefully to prayer in order to acquire the qualities, the virtues necessary to form her character to that of a wise, prudent woman. Even a young religious, though unformed and hasty, if she but apply herself to prayer will soon be seen to have become grave, calm, quiet, and thoughtful.

“The Seraph of Carmel, speaking of prayer, draws a charming comparison. ‘Our soul,’ she says, ‘is like a little field which needs constant watering to make the plants of our virtues, which are its flowers, its precious fruits, grow, and prosper, that we may gather them.’

“Now, you know some fields are easier to water than others, and some souls pray with more facility than others; but when a soul really applies itself to prayer, when it is incapable of refusing anything to God, it finds, whenever it presents herself before Him for prayer, that it becomes recollected without effort, that heaven is poured into it, that grace rains abundantly upon it, without any toil of its own.”

Prayer was to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia a

conversation with God ; and, regarding her neighbour as representing our Divine Lord, she drew from it an ever-increasing and ardent love of souls, a charity which broke forth into action with a generous impetus whenever news of suffering reached her, a charity ever ready to help with a promptitude and generosity which won her much affection.

The year 1850 was rendered memorable to the people of Angers by a terrible catastrophe, the recollection of which still lives in the public mind. A whole battalion of the 11th Light Infantry was precipitated one stormy day into the river Maine. The suspension bridge they were crossing gave way suddenly, and the 500 men of which the battalion consisted were all thrown into the water. It was a terrible sight, some fell on the top of others ; some were wounded by the falling bridge, all were hampered by their uniforms and arms. The whole population of the town rushed out to the rescue, but the wind was high, and the river so rough, that the boats put out were swamped and the rescue parties in them drowned. Priests stood on the banks of the river and gave absolution to the dying, some of whom were seen to make the sign of the Cross as they struggled with the waves. The bridge, being near the Good Shepherd, the three convent chaplains were among the first to arrive upon the scene, while the nuns, who could see the place from their windows, may for the first time have regretted the enclosure which withheld them from joining the Sisters of St. Vincent de Paul, who were either

helping to rescue the soldiers or lending aid to those who had been drawn out of the water.

Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia sent *tourière* Sisters with succour of all kinds, and offered her house as a refuge for those victims of the accident who had no other place of shelter. She thought of the departed also, and had the Office for the Dead recited in the convent chapel, suggested a general Communion to the Community, and ordered a Retreat of three days, with half-an-hour extra for prayer. Four days later she despatched a circular letter to her different houses filled with deeply Christian sentiments. She wrote :—

“The soldiers were rescued only by the greatest heroism, and as they were dragged out of the river, water and blood streaming from them, they fell on their knees weeping and blessing God for having preserved them to their families and their country. The catastrophe seems all the more sad, because the regiment is one of the finest in the army, and was commanded by officers most of whom were young and full of spirit.”

She then goes on to give her daughters accounts of the great charity the people of Angers showed, of the public mourning, and funeral honours to the dead. She tells of the speech the prefect of the town made over the grave, because it showed his belief in God and the future life, and united the patriotic and religious sentiments that make good men.

The Good Shepherd was now an Order so widely

spread, that wherever great events in the Church's history took place the Institute was present, sharing in her sorrows no less than in her joys. Of all such events Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's daughters sent her exact descriptions, in commenting upon which to her religious she would use that picturesque, stirring language which never failed to arouse their zeal.

In 1850 there came from both the Roman foundations, news of the return of Pius IX., of his triumphal entrance, and of the people's joy. The religious of the Lauretana house spoke also of the beneficial effect produced by the presence of French troops, of the order and peace they brought with them, of their faith and the example given by it. They visited the churches and monasteries of the Holy City, went to confession and Communion. When the Pope was approaching Rome, the French troops were sent out to meet him. They marched as far as Albano, and when at length they stood in his presence their sentiments of faith were so stirred by his majestic bearing that they fell at his feet for his blessing. All these circumstances, the men's Christian behaviour, their fatigues, and the fact of the post of honour being held by troops of their own nation, kindled the tenderest sympathies of the religious.

The Pope first visited the church of St. John Lateran when entering Rome, and there received deputations of the clergy and nobility and the foreign ambassadors. His route through the town led past

the Lauretana convent, which had, for the occasion, been thrown open to strangers anxious to catch a sight of His Holiness. As he passed the house he looked round kindly at it, and gave a special blessing to his dear daughters of the Good Shepherd.

The interest felt in Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's work, and in her personally, extended to all devout persons interested in the salvation of souls. The Bishop-Designate of Angoulême, Mgr. Cousseau (whose devotion to the Order had already been shown at Poitiers), prevailed upon her to attend his consecration. It was the worst season of the year, but this did not prove a hindrance to the fulfilment of her promise. On the way she stayed at her convent in Poitiers, arriving there 28th December 1850, to the great joy of her daughters, who received her with every demonstration of sincere veneration. She had brought with her, from the Mother House, a stock of provisions for a treat for her beloved penitents, so that, as usual, she might give joy and happiness to others. It was her way to keep her crosses and tribulations to herself, but to make her daughters sharers in all her joys. Gathered around her upon the occasion of this visit, they hung with intense interest upon her warm affectionate words as she poured out before them a report of the series of graces vouchsafed to the Institute. They have left records of the effect her words produced upon them, telling how their hearts burned within them as she told them of the favours God had bestowed on their Order, of the

renewal of zeal and fervour her visit caused, of their thankfulness for it on that account.

Not that her bodily presence was required to produce these effects—her example, her written words, were a constant stimulus. She was ever on the watch to promote the advantage of her daughters and their works. When the new Bishop of Poitiers, Mgr. Pie, was enthroned, she wrote recommending her house to him. His reply was almost immediate, for only a few days later he came to the Good Shepherd and spent three hours there in visiting the classes, preaching a sermon, and presiding over a meeting of Lady Patronesses. The religious gathered up the words of his sermon as he uttered them, and wrote them down to send to their Mother. He compared the Lady Patronesses of the Good Shepherd to the Egyptian princess who saved the life of the infant Moses. His eloquent words, full of Scripture allusions, had a special attraction for Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia; his devotion to the Church, his love for the Holy See, and other qualities he possessed, all impressed her in favour of the still youthful Bishop.

Hardly had Mother Foundress returned to Angers than she left again, this time for Paris, where a new Superior was about to assume office. From Paris she went to Sens, where she made the pious pilgrimage to St. Savinian's tomb in the church of St. Pierre-le-Vif. She gave a thrilling account of this pilgrimage to the Community at the Mother House on her return. She told them the Saint's history; he was the Apostle of

the district, and had been struck down with an axe while saying Mass in St. Saviour's, a church he had built on the site where Saint Savinian's now stands. She told them of the generous offerings the early Christians made to build a church in the Martyr's honour, to found a Benedictine monastery there; of the same spirit shown in later times, when, after the Revolution, the church was restored to its original use. She traced the history of the sanctuary, the first church, built by Theodesilda, daughter of Clovis, in honour of the holy Martyr and his companions. Her own heart was moved as she thus rehearsed the noble story of the Catholic Church in Sens, and remembered that to her it had been given to stand in Theodesilda's place in modern days, and restore to the Church of God the venerable sanctuary built by her fathers in the faith, to place her daughters there, that, where martyrs had died for God, where Benedictines had for centuries praised Him, their voices might continue the tradition of Divine worship. She had had copies of all authentic notices of the Saint's life and of the church of St. Pierre-le-Vif made for her daughters, and commented on them in her address.

Her rich natural gifts, the supernatural graces of her soul, were all displayed in these familiar conversations with her daughters. Her imagination was so vivid that she could almost see the holy things she described, and, in consequence of this gift, her words were truly living ones, imparting life to others and filling them from the fulness of her own soul. If

she spoke to her daughters of mission work, all were ready at a moment's notice to start and become foreign missionaries; if she spoke to them of the generosity of the Martyrs, of the devotion due to their relics, the Community felt her own enthusiastic devotion for those who laid down their lives for the faith.

The Good Shepherd had now become one of the stations which American Bishops, on their way to Rome, hardly ever failed to visit; and when they, or other missionary Bishops, came, it was Mother Pelletier's custom to beg that they would address a few edifying words to the Community. Upon her return from Sens, the Mother House was visited by Mgr. Purcell, the Archbishop of Cincinnati. His discourse to the religious was full of unction, and he came away so deeply impressed by Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's work that he spoke to Pius IX. of the zeal of the Community. The Pope, perhaps moved by this report, soon afterwards sent to the Laetana a statue of the Blessed Virgin which had been in his own room for years; it was meant as a fresh pledge of his affection for the Order.

It was the 2nd March when Mgr. Purcell officiated in the chapel at the Mother House; the next visit was from Mgr. Demers, Bishop of Vancouver, and took place on the 12th April following. He presided at a clothing.

The Bishop of Angers himself came to the convent on Good Shepherd Sunday, an event which gave great satisfaction to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, who

always thankfully received any marks of favour from him as showing that the unfortunate controversy about the Constitutions had left no root of bitterness. He officiated pontifically in the chapel, and preached a sermon before the whole Community on the duties of the religious and the children towards their Superior, pointing out that the burden of their responsibility was so great that obedience alone could lighten it. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia left nothing undone that could mark her respect for Mgr. Angebault, and drank in eagerly every encouraging word that fell from his lips. She asked him to give the Community his portrait, and he promised to do so. To show that his interest extended all over the work, he visited the sick in the infirmary, and also the convent farm.

Foundations were multiplying everywhere, and even afar off in England, America, and Africa. On Mother-General's feast, 13th March 1851, a band of Sisters left Hammersmith (in London) for Dalbeth, near Glasgow. They opened there a house of refuge for penitents. Hardly were the religious settled in this house, than many applications for admission were made by destitute women. The founder of the house was Mr. Monteith, a recent convert of great piety, who gave £1000 for the work. He also enlisted the sympathetic interest of the Vicar-Apostolic of Glasgow, and of Dr. Smith, his Coadjutor, both of whom often came to the convent to say Mass and preach.

Much interest and surprise was aroused in the great Scotch manufacturing centre by the arrival of the

nuns, and people were amazed to see them shut in from the world, but opening their doors to receive, as members of their family, young women under a social ban, some of whom had been convicted criminals. The transformation of character which soon became apparent in these young women, as they gradually acquired habits of order and piety, created no less amazement. People from Edinburgh, passing through Glasgow, would visit the convent. By these, and other like means, its fame was spread, and especially among the Irish population of Glasgow. There were at that time about 20,000 Irish employed in the Glasgow factories, and from this source came many applications for the admission of, perhaps, a daughter, perhaps some other relation. It was impossible to receive all who came; there was neither room nor means of support to allow of this. Irish faith often survives amid many sins and disorders, and in Glasgow the advent of the religious of the Good Shepherd, the mere sight of whom produced a kind of revival of faith among these poor creatures. They used even to bring their sick to be cured by the nuns, attributing to them miraculous powers. The religious received all who came kindly, no matter what brought them, that none might be offended. Sometimes they gave little gifts, such as holy water or some object of piety, and, so strong was the simple faith of these poor Irish people, so fervent their prayers, that more than once God healed their sick. The religious at Dalbeth were most anxious to show their convent to their Mother-General and receive her

blessing, and were most urgent in their entreaties to her to come and visit them. With the idea of securing the interest of their Sisters at Angers, they wrote to them also, telling them of the great care they would take of their beloved Mother's health if she would but come. The visit, however, was an impossibility; every house of the Order would, no doubt, have had the same wish; and Mother-General was obliged to restrict her intercourse with all, for the sake of each, to correspondence, a correspondence kept up with such unflagging zeal that there were none of her daughters whose joys she did not share, none she did not help in days of difficulty.

As we have said, the Order was multiplying even in Africa. In the month of May, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia sent forth three of her daughters from the Mother House laden with presents. Their destination was Miserghin, where, in the preceding month, a new foundation, an offshoot of El Biar, had been begun in deference to the Bishop, Mgr. Pavy's, wish that Oran should have the same advantages as El Biar. Sisters had been already sent from El Biar, but, so great were the obstacles to their entering the house which the Bishop had appointed for them, that they were obliged, for a time, to take shelter in other quarters. They stayed for some time with the Trinitarian nuns, and afterwards in the country-house of General Montauban. At length they were permitted to take possession of their own poor little house, their first care on entering being to bring our Lord,

in the Blessed Sacrament to it. "Then, the stable became beautiful," they wrote to their Mother-General: "Jesus lives here; the Angels surround it."

Next they set to work to form some kind of enclosure which would also serve as a barrier against the inroads of Arab brigands, for the house stood outside the village of Miserghin, and three leagues from the city of Oran. General Montauban (afterwards Count de Palikao) took a warm interest in their work, looking upon it as one of great importance, and kindly sent soldiers to dig out a canal and bring water into the enclosure, while the nuns themselves and their first penitents picked out stones and piled them in heaps. But the house was found to be too far from Oran for the number of penitents to increase rapidly; it seemed to lie in the wilderness.

CHAPTER XVIII

JOURNEY TO MUNICH

1851

Re-election—Mother Pelletier's travels—Visits to Tours, Nancy, Strasbourg—Arrival at Munich—Mary von Moerl—Mother Pelletier's prophetic foresight—Return by Münster, Aix-la-Chapelle, Namur, Mons, Lille, Amiens, St. Omer, Rheims—Association in honour of our Lady.

IN July 1851 Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia was re-elected Superior-General of the Congregation. Forty-nine religious, twenty-four of whom were Prioresses, from different countries, took part in the election, and Mgr. Angebault, assisted by M. Joubert (Superior of the Mother House), presided.

After it had taken place Mother-General assembled her religious, and gave certain rules for the government of the house—for the religious, and the several classes of the Community, penitents, Magdalens, and consecrated. Availing herself of the opportunity the election offered, she introduced the Prioresses to the Bishop of Angers, who said to each some words of advice adapted to her special work. A few days later, to the Mother's satisfaction, he returned to the convent, and then, in compliance with her wishes, promised to write this advice down, and did so.

As the Mother's words instilled fresh zeal into her daughters, so she herself came forth from such solemnities as her election, her soul renewed in youth, her whole being quickened with the grace necessary for the development, the sanctification of her vast Community.

The Superior of Munich had a great desire to take Mother Foundress back with her to show her her German sheepfolds. Before the election she had broached the subject to her, and, convinced by her words that the idea did not displease her, awaited another opportunity to repeat the request.

This opportunity occurred on the very day of the election. In presenting the local Superiors to the Bishop of Angers, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia spoke so kindly of the convent at Munich that the Prioress found courage to renew her petition. It was granted, Mother Foundress stipulating only for delay until she had finished some urgent business.

On the 8th September, accordingly, the party, consisting of the two Superiors, two other Sisters, and the Abbé Benoist, senior chaplain to the Good Shepherd, set out on the journey, but not all together. Mother Pelletier heard Mass, and received Holy Communion, and then, in order to spare the Sisters the sorrow of parting, left the convent early in the morning, before the Sisters had risen. The same evening her companions overtook her at Tours, where she stayed, hoping to visit the Refuge and see Mother St. Victor, who was dangerously ill, possibly dying.

The thought of again visiting the house where she

had been trained to the religious life and had spent ten years, and of seeing Mother St. Victor, whom she loved and revered for her saintliness, awakened profound emotion in Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia ; it was, therefore, with the most intense disappointment that she learned that Mother St. Victor could not receive her. So deeply did she take the refusal to heart, that for a whole day she could take no food, and that night, in the railway train, was seized, to her daughter's terror, with violent vomiting. The next halting-place was Paris, where the travellers were entertained at the convent of the Good Shepherd in the Rue des Postes. The religious there were anxious to buy a larger house, situated at Bellevue, which Mother Foundress accordingly visited. She thought it too dear, and dissuaded her daughters from the purchase.

She visited several convents while in Paris, although her stay was only of three days' duration. She loved all religious Communities. The following is one of her letters from Paris :—

“PARIS, *on the move.*

“To my most beloved daughters, to my Shepherdesses, to my lambs.

“The peace of our Lord.

“At the Carmelites I saw a robe the holy Mother St. Teresa had cut out and sewn for winter, for the Infant Jesus. I kissed it on my knees, for all of you, my dearest daughters. . . .

“I venerated a bone from this holy Mother's right arm. I saw an old cloak that belonged to dear Mother

Anne of St. Bartholomew; she used it also to cover Mother St. Teresa. . . .

"I saw Carmel flourishing, and also Mother de Lignac's house—both of them like the Good Shepherd at Angers.

"But after all, my dear daughters, I have nothing, for, alas! I cannot see you. And are not you my relics, my joy, my crown?"

It was no wonder that letters such as this, straight from the Mother's heart, which overflowed with love and devotion for her daughters, went to their hearts, and indelibly impressed them.

Years afterwards the Superior of the Munich house, in recording the history of this journey, begins with the following touching dedication:—

"From the heights of heaven, where I see you, dearest Mother, obtain for me, from Him who inspired you to speak so well to your daughters, the gift of recording all that of which we were the witnesses in that long, painful journey undertaken for the glory of God. Which of us could ever forget the words of your lips, the beautiful thoughts of your mind, the consoling accents welling up from your large maternal heart, so suited to every need of your children?"

The journey from Paris to Nancy was very trying for Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia. The railroad went only to Bar-le-Duc, and was met there by a stage-coach running in connection with the Paris trains. Places in this coach belonged of right to passengers

furnished with through-tickets, and a fellow-traveller of our party, attracted to the religious by their gentle ways, warned them to be on their guard against people who might try to oust them from their places in the stage-coach, and induce them to travel in another conveyance neither so fast nor so comfortable. This was just what happened. Upon the arrival of the train at Bar, two men presented themselves, and very politely begged Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia to let them have the seats in the coach, which, in spite of discreet expostulations from her companions, she permitted. She paid dear enough afterwards for her excessive kindness. The other conveyance was draughty, tumble-down, and drawn by a pair of wretched horses, and arrived half-an-hour after the stage-coach had gone. It was then six o'clock in the evening, and the journey was continued by night through a desolate tract of country in an unsettled political state, alarming to the travellers. Cold and fatigue again brought on Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's vomiting fits. It was not until two A.M. that at last the Sisters reached a miserable-looking inn, frequented only by rough waggoners. They stopped and knocked, but for a long time no one answered, and when, at length, the hostess did make an appearance, she was angry at being disturbed in her sleep, and received them with a very bad grace. She would not hear of making coffee to stop Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's sickness, who consequently was obliged to lie down without swallowing a mouthful.

Next morning they started again in their carriage of the preceding day, and reached Toul at mid-day, Nancy between 4 and 5 P.M. The Sisters in the latter town had given up all hopes of their arrival, as the stage-coach had come without them, and received them with joy, all the greater for their previous disappointment.

After seeing that M. Benoist and the Sisters travelling with her were attended to, the Mother, with her customary vivacity, threw herself into the life of the house, visited every part of it—all the offices and the classes.

The three days she spent at Nancy were filled with business and anxiety. The diocesan authorities wished to constitute themselves proprietors of the entire convent, and to make the Sisters their tenants, a proposal to which Mother Foundress, well aware of all the foundation had cost her daughters when made in 1835, and of all they had spent upon it during their sixteen years of occupation, refused her consent. She went over the convent grounds, which were very large, and with that thoughtfulness which embraced all the classes of her *Sheepfolds*, as she loved to call them, planned the position of a large playground for the penitents.

The next stage of the journey was to Strasbourg. As far as Sarrebourg the journey, as on the preceding day, was made in a carriage, but one of no ordinary kind. It was a huge, two-storeyed vehicle, and the Mother had to climb into it by a ladder. This operation was repeated at Sarrebourg, and then the monster

carriage itself, with its contents, was hoisted bodily and placed upon a railway truck. Thus the journey to Strasbourg was continued, the Mother smiling and calm among all these small vexations.

She stayed at Strasbourg three busy days, spending even part of her nights in advising, comforting, and encouraging her daughters. Here, as at Nancy, they delighted in the praise everywhere bestowed on their Mother, and carefully cherished in their heart all such words as, "What a good Mother is yours!" "What a happiness to be governed by a Superior so devoted, so joyous in her devotedness," and the like.

The rest of the journey was a succession of mishaps, beginning with the *tourière* Sister's loss of all the tickets. Others, of course, had to be bought. They could not always travel by rail, and when this happened it became necessary to hire carriages. The party rested at Augsburg, where they were entertained by the De Willi family, who welcomed Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia with sentiments of deepest respect. One of the religious at Angers belonged to this family.

At last Munich was reached with its expectant religious and the 500 children of their fold, Mother Pelletier's heart throbbing with loving joy. "Oh, my Munich children!" she said to her companions; "I long so to see and know them, that it is almost more than I can bear."

The following letter to her daughters at Angers expresses the emotion she felt:—

"MUNICH, *October 26th, 1851.*

" 'How beautiful are thy tents, O Jacob.'

"To my most beloved daughters.

"After a thousand obstacles, difficulties, and fatigues, we arrived last evening at this incomparably beautiful foundation. Some of your dear but too short letters were waiting for us. The want of interesting news from our dear mother country made me a little sad. I spoke of it in secret to our Blessed Mother, and when I had gathered you all into her Sacred Heart, I recovered peace.

"What shall I say to you of Munich? That it is indisputably the most beautiful Community in the Christian universe. Mother St. John of the Cross ought to have forewarned me.

"I have just come from the reception, which could have been but to honour our Blessed Lady and her Institute in the person of her poor little slave. It is not in Germany that one meets with coldness and indifference. No; there never was such a gala day! In the first place, several ladies were waiting for us at the railway station. A little child, only six years of age, came to me and caught my hand, saying, 'Come quickly, madame; I have a carriage for you. I know everything; I *do*. Come, I want to show you the way.' Then he dragged me along and made me get into a carriage. He was beautiful as an angel. He beckoned to the coachman not to drive fast, then got into another carriage with his mother; the Sisters

tourières (who are delightful) were in a third. The dear child was the forerunner, not only of the Community, but of all that quarter of the town. There is a beautiful avenue leading to the church, and a thousand people were waiting there; the school children all in white, with wreaths on their heads and baskets of flowers in their hands. The chaplain then introduced us most courteously into the magnificent church. Never, no, never, dearest Sisters, have I seen anything like it before. The King's chapel-master intoned a most beautiful *Te Deum*, and our young Sisters then sang the rest of it; they have voices like angels.

"After this the Superior handed over to us the keys of the enclosure, made of silver-gilt. Then followed a lovely procession to conduct the chaplains into the Community-room. Tears flowed abundantly. The dear Mother herself was delightful; and full of delicacy and kindness. She threw herself into our arms, and then all the rest did the same.

"In the evening every one wanted to do something for us, and all sorts of things were brought to us. To-morrow I will tell you more about it. I long, also, to tell you about our poor Sisters at Strasbourg—the Xaviers of the Institute they are indeed—and of their own works, these on such a grand scale too. Oh, how our Sisters love you all! Then they have such considerate ways, and are so good, so kind to the penitents, who worship them. And the penitents are so good and docile also!

“Good-bye till to-morrow. It is too dark to see, and besides I am very tired. I love you in our Lord.

“MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA.”

Her arrival in her convent at Munich had been celebrated as that of a great personage. The convent bells pealed; the inhabitants of the neighbourhood in which it stood went out to meet the good Mother Superior of the white nuns, whose school their children attended; the children had told them she was expected. In the convent chapel, where she went first, the organist was at the organ to help the Sisters, who sang the *Benedictus*; and there, in our Lady's hands, Mother-General left the beautiful gilt keys presented to her, and from those hands they have never since been removed. There, also, at the foot of the altar, she laid all the crowns and flowers the children had brought her.

She was far from well when she arrived; the sickness, from which she had suffered on the journey, was increased by a severe cold, but applications of ice stopped the vomiting, and, no sooner had she so far recovered, than she began to receive visitors and make visits. The Archbishop, Cardinal de Reisach, came twice to the convent to see her, and had long conversations with her. Comte de Seinsheim, minister of finances, offered her his services, and took her to the Royal Palace, where His Majesty, Louis I., admitted her at once to an audience. There was no mistaking the genuine pleasure with which the King received his

visitor. He wanted to know whether she liked the Munich convent, and how many convents of the Order there were.

While at Munich, Mother Pelletier was very anxious to go and see Mary von Moerl, an Ecstatica much visited by pious people. She had a desire to consult her about her spiritual state, hoping to find light and consolation; both of which she needed, for, since her re-election, which had taken place in opposition to her own wishes, she had felt her burden very heavy.

The state of the roads over the mountains and the severity of the weather made the visit impossible, however, for the Mother herself, and she was therefore obliged to let M. Benoist and M. Levoyer (another Priest from Angers, who was studying German in Munich) go without her. M. Levoyer's sister was the Superior of the Good Shepherd convent at Lille. The two Priests started, charged by Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia to recommend her to the prayers of the Ecstatica, whom they found in an ecstasy—her eyes raised, body inclined forwards, hands clasped, knees hardly touching the bed for support. Her director, a Franciscan father, recalled her from her ecstasy to recommend her visitors to her. Never did either of them forget the look she turned on them out of her deep-set eyes; she seemed to read into their very conscience. Then, selecting two religious pictures out of a packet, she gave one to either Priest so exactly suited to the state of his soul, that each was almost alarmed. Then she chose out another picture,

one of St. Matthias, for Mother Pelletier. It was found afterwards in her prayer-book carefully preserved.

The supernatural intimations she had herself often received from God, no doubt made her feel the more attracted to Mary von Moerl. With regard to foundations, she had been directed where one should be made, another restored; which of the penitents should be kept, which dismissed; and regarding the future career of religious there at the very outset of their apostolic mission.

As we have seen, her foundations had been generally begun in such poverty as to defy all considerations of mere human prudence, but the Foundress beheld, in the light of God, the future reserved for her undertakings. An instance of this kind we have already seen in reference to the convent at Sens. The Archbishop desired the foundation, asked for it, but could supply no funds. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia therefore carried the matter to our Lady, and, while kneeling at her feet, heard these words: "I shall be pleased at Sens in the hearts of thy daughters." The convent, needless to say, was founded.

It was generally after Holy Communion that such lights were imparted by God to His servant, showing her what the future of souls, and especially of her fellow-workers, was to be. In 1835, writing of Mme. de Couëspel, she said, "As to the person who is coming to join us, I have seen her long since by spiritual vision." And later to Madame de Couëspel herself: "It was indeed you I saw in God in spite of all my

sins. I knew you in His Divine Light; you are my support. I think you will found Genoa and Turin." And what she had foreseen came to pass. Among her many remarkable prophecies, reported by her daughters, one of the most noteworthy was that which referred to Mother Mary of St. Marina Verger, afterwards third Superior-General of the Order. This religious, a countrywoman of the General-in-Chief of the Vendean armies, the heroic Cathelineau, had, while but a child, imbibed in her native parish of Pin-au-Mauges, the Catholic faith, and heroic charity of her forefathers who had died for their religion. She admired all religious Orders without special attraction to any one in particular, not having at that time come into contact with the Good Shepherd. In 1845, however, she came to Angers to accompany a friend who was visiting the Good Shepherd to determine her own vocation.

Mother Pelletier had no sooner seen her than, gazing at her with her scrutinising glance, she said briefly, "You, too, are coming here."—"But, Mother," was the reply, "I never even thought of the Good Shepherd; I do not know it."—"God wants you here," replied the Mother; "our Institute will suit your disposition. On the 8th December you will come here with your friend."—"That is impossible," said the young lady; "it is but a few days hence. My father would not hear of it."—"But come you will all the same," said the Mother.

And so sure of this was she that on the 8th

December she sent to meet both young ladies by the packet-boat, in which the other was expected. On entering the Novitiate under the name of Sister Mary of St. Marina, Mlle. Verger, in her humility, deemed herself incapable of even an ordinary charge, nor did she think that she had in aught attracted the attention of the Mother-General. But after her profession in 1848, when sent forth by obedience, she was amazed at seeing Mother Pelletier gazing on her with tender love, and hearing from her, "My child, God will bless your labours. You will build for us a beautiful house at Perpignan; you will found Barcelona, and in days to come will be a Provincial."

"But, Mother," said the Sister, "you are mistaken; you mean some one else."

"My child, it is to you I am speaking," was the answer.

The whole conversation was a secret imparted only to the Mistress of Novices, who received the communication with these words, "Believe all our Mother has told you, and never forget her words."

Seven years later, Sister Mary of St. Marina was appointed Superior at Perpignan, where she undertook the building of a large convent on a magnificent scale, the plans for it being approved by the Bishop, Mgr. Gerbet. She also bought a country house for the use of the orphans and Magdalens. Before embarking definitively in these costly undertakings, she was beset by anxiety, not knowing whence funds for them were to come.

“Begin, my child,” wrote Mother Pelletier. “Fear nothing; Providence will come to your aid.”

In the course of that year a generous lady brought 20,000 francs, and before five years had elapsed, Mother Mary of St. Marina had paid off the whole debt on the convent in the town. For the country house 100,000 francs were wanted. “Begin,” wrote the Mother again; “what! my child! do you hesitate to raise another temple to the Lord?”

This was the “beautiful house at Perpignan” the servant of God had seen in vision.

Twice she sent the same Sister Mary of St. Marina to Barcelona to prepare the way there for a foundation, but twice her endeavours came to nought. In 1880, however, that is twelve years after Mother Pelletier’s death, she, being still Superior at Perpignan, received instructions from the then Mother-General to return to Spain to try and found a house at Barcelona, and this time she succeeded. She had not disclosed Mother Pelletier’s predictions to the new Mother-General.

The other prediction, that she was one day to be a Provincial, was uttered at a time when Province and Provincials were non-existent in the Order. They were not established until 1855, and Mother Mary of St. Marina, having by this time seen all Mother Pelletier’s other prophecies about herself fulfilled, and dreading the office of Provincial, tried to escape it by keeping away from the Mother House, hoping to be forgotten. But in 1889 Mother-General Mary of St.

Peter de Coudenhove sent for her and appointed her Provincial of France.

Not until she was herself elected Superior-General of the Order, in 1892, did she tell the story of Mother Foundress' predictions in her regard.

In 1892, when Mother St. Marina was elected Superior-General, she no longer made a secret of these predictions; nor is it at all unlikely that the servant of God, enlightened from on high, may have foreseen the whole religious career of the young Vendean lady, when first she visited the cloisters of the Good Shepherd for the sole purpose of accompanying her friend, one of those maidens of Catholic La Vendée, who have shed the fragrance of their virtues in many a religious community, both at home and abroad.

After her visit to Munich, Mother Pelletier went to Münster, where she was received with every token of religious veneration, not only by her daughters, but by the Bishop and benefactors of the Good Shepherd, also by Councillor Lohkamp and Baron Herekerink. Mother-General did not spare herself in any way when called upon to satisfy the affectionate interest, or even the mere curiosity, of those who wished to see her.

She admitted several postulants for the Mother House, and took a lively interest in whatever concerned her dear penitents; she thought their barley bread looked very black, inquired whether it was good, and tasted it herself. On asking how it was made so palatable, they told her the barley meal was mixed with honey.

She arrived at Aix-la-Chapelle at about 5 P.M. on the 15th October, after a long journey by *diligence*, which had greatly fatigued her. Her daughters received her, surrounded by their sixty penitents, and to these latter the Mother devoted the evening, receiving their good wishes and listening to the little complimentary addresses prepared for the occasion. If asked whether she wanted anything she would only answer, "I am wholly at your service."

As usual, her first care on arriving had been for her fellow-travellers, and satisfied about them, she allowed her daughters to gather round her and care for her, at whose hands each had severally received the holy habit of religion.

There were a great many of the penitents who knew no French, but, in visiting the class, she contrived to show her maternal affection for all, and sixteen years later her words were still so well remembered that one penitent could recall all she had said. She listened to a little complimentary speech made by the best educated penitent, and then looked at the work done by each, with the sweet cordial grace that won for her all hearts, even when her words were not understood, grace which came from her close imitation of our Lord in His tender love and charity for the poor.

She pleased the Sisters by telling them she almost imagined herself in her own room at Angers, and by congratulating them on the good order of their house. She told the Sisters employed in the garden that they

were better off than their Sisters at Angers, where the ground was full of stones and not like their nice fine soil.

Baron de Lomnesson expressed a wish to take her to the convent of the Sacred Heart of Blumenthal where his daughter was a nun. This visit gave occasion to a gracious interchange of kindly greetings between the two French Orders in a strange land. Mother Pelletier herself thoroughly enjoyed it, and her edifying charity, her holy cordiality, delighted the religious.

Her next visit was to the Franciscan nuns. Here she was greatly edified by the holy poverty of the convent. She told the Superior that the Community would be much increased in a few years, and it has, in fact, now more than ten houses in America.

The same day Mother Pelletier visited the Sisters of the Child Jesus, who use their parlour for a *crèche*. Her first act on entering this room was to fall on her knees before the statue of the Divine Child, and when the Superior came in the two Mothers met with the pious cordial greeting of friends long united in heart.

The Novitiate of this convent pleased Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia very much; she called it "Mother Clare's treasury." The whole house was shown to her, including the little girls' dormitory, where the children were already asleep. She stood at one of the beds to gaze at a child of five, peacefully asleep with the expression of a soul in the presence of Angels. She woke while being watched, and, seeing the white nun standing

by her, smiled. Mother Clare told her to sing, and, in her angelical little voice, she sang an Italian hymn to the Child Jesus. This roused the whole dormitory, and little faces, like angels, looked on in wonder and amazement. This scene, of course, touched the heart of so devoted a lover of childhood as Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia.

The day following these visits, the Mother went to the Cathedral, which is said to have been built by Charlemagne, and contains many precious relics. As she got out of the carriage, she was surrounded by children, attracted by the white religious habit, which was strange to them, and whose innocent curiosity she encouraged. When shown the relics, kneeling down to venerate them she lifted our Lady's girdle to touch it with her lips, and, when shown the relic of holy Simeon, exclaimed, "This is then the arm which bore the Saviour of the world."

One other Community she visited before leaving Aix, that of the Sisters of St. Charles Borromeo, who had kindly entertained the religious of the Good Shepherd for several weeks when they first came to the town. The Superior was ill at the time of Mother Pelletier's visit, but nevertheless saw her. "You took such care of my daughters," said Mother Pelletier, as she embraced her, "that it was my duty to come and thank you."

Everywhere in Aix Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia left behind her the impression of amiability as well as holiness. Her conciliatory spirit was shown even

in dealing with the architect of the house. There was a difference of opinion between him and the religious about the shape of the grating to be put into the chapel; this difference had already existed for some time. The religious wished the grating to be square, as being more in conformity with their rules; the architect wished it to be ogival, as harmonising better with the style of the chapel.

Ever ready to make reasonable concessions involving no breach of rule, she asked the architect to send her a drawing of his design. This she found could be carried out, without prejudice to the enclosure, provided the bars were not made wider than the rule permits, and she therefore gratified him by accepting it.

The Priest who was her confessor while she was at Aix, said, long afterwards, that it had been one of the privileges God had granted him to look into so beautiful and pure a soul as hers.

On the 19th October Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia reached Namur. M. Benoist stayed at the Bishop's Palace.

The chaplain of the Good Shepherd was absent, and the Bishop, Mgr. de Hesselles, who loved the Good Shepherd, wrote to him, "Come back quickly to Namur! There are great doings at the Good Shepherd; the Mother-General from Angers is with her daughters." Next day the chaplain returned.

The Bishop's reception of the Foundress was most gracious. He said to her, "Very Reverend Mother,

hitherto I have done all I could for your daughters, and will, in the future, continue to do so."

Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's visit to Namur included inspection of the whole house, and of all the classes, an audit of all the accounts, besides which she admitted to consecration, for two years, six penitents, the remainder of whose lives was most edifying.

After Namur she visited Mons. Her daughters expressed their delight at her visit as follows:—

"It was the first time since our little tribe began to walk under the protection and guidance of her pastoral staff, that so great a favour had been ours. Beloved Sisters, it were difficult indeed to tell how we rejoiced, how happy were the moments, alas! too short, our dear Mother spent with us; how delightful the recreations, how interesting her accounts of her travels in Germany! What the impression made upon each of us by her ever-burning zeal; and the tender love in her soul for the sheep of the Divine Shepherd!

"With what living active charity she went among our dear penitents! How her heart, so compassionate for every one of these poor souls, warmed their hearts, and they gathered round her without a sign of timidity! She reminded us of our Saviour on earth, when all who loved Him, all who wanted Him to cure them of their infirmities, came to Him.

"Canon Descamps, Dean of St. Waudru (our Superior), and M. Misonne (our Chaplain) are so glad to

have seen our Mother-General. Canon Descamps spoke warmly in praise of her zeal in a discourse he gave in our chapel, and both he and M. Benoist came with her to visit the classes.

“Our Preservation children were much moved by our Mother’s kindness. When it came to the time of separation, the poor little things wept and sobbed, and every one’s eyes were moist. It was touching to see the dear, tender Mother herself; she could not bear to leave them.”

At Lille the same enthusiasm is found in the account given by the religious of their Mother’s visit to them. Away from the Mother House she had to place less restraint upon the expression of the feelings of her affectionate heart.

“Yes, beloved Sisters, more fortunate than many others, to us has been given the privilege of a visit from our revered Mother-General, accompanied by M. Benoist and the dear Sister-Assistant from Munich.

“On the 26th October, at about six in the evening, our convent doors opened to receive her, the Community welcoming her with mingled respect and joy. Next day our Mother visited each of our flocks, and was everywhere received with heartfelt rejoicings. Every one of the children say they will never forget how good she was to them.

“But, dear Sisters, you know how truly it may be said of her charity, wherever she passes, that ‘she goes about doing good.’ Yes, indeed, her words, so filled with the sweetness of our Divine Master, have

been to our souls like the bread brought to Elias in the desert.

"The Bishop knew she was here, and kindly came to see her.

"Alas! beloved Sisters, you know too well how short a time joy lasts here below. Hardly had we begun to rejoice in our dear Mother General's presence, than we lost it. Our dearest Mother left us for Amiens, calling here on the way back, then went to St. Omer, taking with her our Mother Mary of the Angels."

At Amiens, Mother General spent two days, and was welcomed with the same filial affection. At St. Omer, she stayed two days, and saw Count du Tertre, who resembled M. de Neuville in charity to the Order. Thence she went to Rheims, and everywhere shed around her encouragement and consolation.

Meanwhile the Angers Community were anxiously expecting her return, which took place on November 8th. She was received first in the convent church, which was decorated and lighted up as for a grand function. The religious, in their choir mantles, were in their stalls when the Mother arrived. She first prostrated herself before the altar, and made an act of thanksgiving, then taking her place in the choir, she gave the kiss of peace to her Assistant, Mother Mary of St. Margaret Desmoulins, and afterwards with a kindly smile of greeting to her daughters, she proceeded to the Community-room, to tell them all about her travels.

The day following was kept as a great holiday by all the classes in the house.

The Association of the Treasury of Mary's Heart was established this same year by Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, with M. Joubert's approbation. It had for its object: to honour our Lady; the foundation of a privileged altar for Masses for departed associates; the maintenance of Divine worship in the chapels belonging to the Order of the Good Shepherd. Persons in the world as well as religious might belong to it, and Mother Pelletier gave her daughters leave to ask their families to pay the annual subscription of ten francs, or to make it up themselves by their work when not employed in their official duties. It was one of the means she adopted for spreading devotion to our Lady, and of drawing down her blessing on the benefactors and undertakings of the Order.

CHAPTER XIX

TRIALS—NEUDORF IN AUSTRIA

1852

Mgr. Pavy—Visitation of convents — Nazareth — Trials of Mother Pelletier—Foundation at Neudorf in Austria—Countess Hahn—Hahn.

WITH advancing years, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia redoubled her zeal more and more for the growth and perfection of the Institute, and the annually increasing number of vocations and professions at Angers marked its prosperity.

The first event to be recorded in 1852 is a visit from Mgr. Pavy, the Bishop of Algiers, to whom Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia was delighted to give a cordial and religious welcome. He presided at a profession, as he mentions in the following letter to the Superior at El-Biar :—

“I have just come from Angers, where I spent the Monday and Tuesday of this week. I cannot describe to you the holy joy I there experienced. What an admirable house! what a worthy Mother-General! what progress in so short a time! what universal fervour! and what grand prospects for the future! At a single profession, thirty-seven religious and five Magdalens!

“To crown all, I was received just as I am in Algiers—that is, quite like a Father. In a quarter of an hour we were quite at home, and mutually understood one another.

“The ceremonies were beautiful, the music exquisite, and in this, no distinction is to be made between Mothers, penitents, and Magdalens. The latter delighted me. I went all over the convent; it is a holy place, truly a Paradise on earth, and with heartfelt joy I invoked every blessing of Heaven upon it.”

For a long time Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, whose care for the temporal interests of her great family was unremitting, had been working to obtain the recognition of her Community by the State. She succeeded in this at length, and on the 13th September 1852, the decree giving the Good Shepherd a place among Orders recognised in France, was signed by Napoleon, President of the Republic. The next year, whatever property the religious acquired for its benefit, and all donations from benefactors, were allowed by law to be the property of the Order.

In telling her daughters of the successful issue of this affair, Mother Pelletier gave them instructions about acquiring property, and with regard to any building they might undertake in their convents. She also told them to inform their respective Superiors of the success which had crowned her efforts.

In this same year she made a further visitation of her houses, travelling across France to Bourges, Mou-

lins and Grenoble. She stayed four days at Bourges, it was a house to which she felt a special attraction on account of the miracle performed there through the intercession of Blessed Germaine Cousin, and, when taken to visit the bakery, her daughters tell us, she knelt down, and piously kissed the trough in which the dough had increased as the Sisters were kneading it.

The religious say also that, by her prudent words and advice, she helped them to establish order in their convent. The Archbishop showed her great respect and attention, and it was in fulfilment of a promise to him that, a few months later, she again undertook the fatiguing journey to Bourges in order to be present when he blessed the convent chapel.

Moulins was the next place she visited. She spent two days there, visited all the classes, and delighted every one by the indescribable charm of her words. When she addressed her daughters, which she did both often and willingly, they felt that it was the pure doctrine of Father Eudes, their venerable founder, which fell from her lips; there were the same ideas of the value of souls, of the beauty of conversion, of the sublimity of their vocation; words expressive of the burning fervour of her zeal. She had, in fact, by her study of his works at the Refuge in Tours, saturated her mind with his spirit.

At Lyons her visit was, as in other places, the occasion of a great revival of fervour both in the religious and those under their care. The children and young

girls gathered round her in groups whenever she appeared in their playground, on the watch for what she had to say to them,—perhaps a few pious words,—perhaps the story of some wonderful occurrence at one of the other houses. They clung to her presence, and could not bear to lose sight of her.

In travelling from Lyons to Annonay by the Rhône, she nearly met with a bad accident in landing from the boat. A plank, which was laid down for passengers to come on shore, was abruptly jerked loose from its fastenings by a sudden movement of the boat, just as the Mother stood on it, and she must inevitably have been plunged into the water, had it not been for the assistance of the Sister who supported her. She remained quite calm, and the incident, which might have ended fatally, was thus changed into an occasion of thanksgiving.

With her habitual zeal for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the Order, she had no sooner returned to Angers than she set to work to create a foundation at Arras in obedience to the wish expressed by Mgr. Parisis, who appreciated the good work done in other dioceses. He charged M. de Sencquesaing, Curé of the parish, to make the preliminary arrangements needed for this new foundation. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia intrusted a religious of practical good sense and of solid virtue with this work. The Superior she chose was Mother Mary of the Holy Infancy Klein. She ruled the house in the perfect spirit of the Order for twenty-four years; it succeeded admir-

ably, and at the time of her death above 2000 young women had found shelter in it.

Outside the gates of Angers, but near them, the Community owned a farm, hitherto used as a kind of supplementary garden, which it was now Mother Foundress' plan to convert into an agricultural colony for young female prisoners. She hoped to make it a school of Christian education, the complement of all her other works of charity, where these poor children would learn the meaning of religion and morality, would be taught the duty of self-respect, and might hope to regain the respect of others. She sent the Sisters employed in the gardens, from her own convent, to prepare Nazareth, and used frequently to visit them to encourage them in their work, and told them what to plant and cultivate. In a very short time the place wore a new aspect. The old tumble-down farm buildings were so changed that the Mother was able to convert one of them into an Oratory where Mass was said. The farm was not far from a spot we have already mentioned as having been the hiding-place from which, during the Revolution, M. Gruget, a Catholic priest, gave absolution to 2000 Vendéans who were put to death on the Champs des Martyrs in 1794.

Mme. Famin, a wealthy and pious lady, who had made Mme. de Couëspel's acquaintance at Nice, and had loved and admired her with no ordinary affection, wishing to follow in her footsteps, retired to reside at Nazareth. She had even begged as a favour to be allowed to bear Mme. Couëspel's name, Teresa of Jesus

She took up her abode in this house, and the earnestness of her piety was the more edifying as she had lived so many years in the world. Mother-General cherished her with an affection such as she had bestowed on Mme. de Couëspel.

But she was not long spared to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia. She died during the Mother's absence in Germany, calling for her often on her deathbed: "Come, Mother! oh! come!" Mme. Famin had helped to enlarge the domain of Nazareth. She was wont to say that *the Holy Family took great delight in it; that great things were to be done there for the glory of God; that a countless band of young girls appeared to her in the far-off future.*

Through the exertions of M. Valon, the Prefect of Angers, the colony received Government sanction, and, on the 21st April 1852, it was ready to receive the first prisoners who arrived from Rennes, and who were seventy-five in number. At the station two religious received them, and conveyed them in large carriages to Nazareth. Mother Pelletier spent the night there, as it was her wish to be present when the arrival took place. All necessaries had been provided by the Community, who had for some time been hard at work getting it ready.

Next day she went back to her convent, and soon afterwards gave her daughters the following account of what had occurred:—

"I should have liked you all to have been at Nazareth to receive them. At first they were sad

and frightened; but once seated by the crackling fire of vine branches which was blazing away on the kitchen-hearth, our little birds began to chirp. We gave them some hot soup, meat, and wine, and that melted their poor hearts. They had not had such a feast for some time!

"Next morning we had a new surprise ready for them. Their prison dress was exchanged for the frocks you had made for them with such eagerness and charity. They gazed from one to another, and could not make it out. But in the garden, part of which was shown to them, they quite recovered. 'We aren't in prison, then?' asked one of them. 'You are at the Good Shepherd, my children, that you may learn to love the good God and serve Him, and learn too how to work, so that by-and-bye you may be able to help your families.' 'Thank you, Sister.' 'You must not speak like that,' said one of the older ones; '*here they are Mothers,*' accompanying the words with a forcible gesture.

"Very well, my daughters, let us be indeed Mothers, and watchful shepherds to guide this new flock. It will be a hard task, but the reward will be magnificent.

"The town takes a great interest in the work. His Lordship beholds it with pleasure. He has promised to say Mass at our dear Nazareth."

She had been always fond of repeating a Christian maxim she had often heard the good Mothers repeat at the conferences of the Refuge: "Grace is a fruit of the Cross. Only those who climb that tree can reach it."

This motto was very applicable to the work at Nazareth, so far as she was concerned, for it cost her many a cross, many a disappointment in those she trusted, especially in the earlier years. She was, moreover, cheated about the property itself, and obliged to pay a second time for part of the land, with the result that she was long burdened with debt.

Her work was, however, appreciated by the government, and a hundred more young prisoners were brought from the prison at Clairvaux. This time the journey was made with three religious in charge, who rejoiced in thus going out, like the Good Shepherd, to seek the lost sheep.

Every kind of preparation was made by Mother Foundress for the reception of these new children. She had dormitories and large rooms constructed, and the foundations of a chapel, and house for the chaplain, laid. At first the children were so pleased with the gentle treatment of the Mothers, that they were all on their good behaviour, but it was not long before the remembrance of prison severity wore off, and then the bad side of their nature got the upper hand. It truly seemed as if the religious had to encounter the devil's vengeance for trying to snatch these souls from his grasp.

But little by little, by persistent Christian firmness, Mother-General and her daughters overcame the spirit of rebellion and established order. The souls of the children became touched by grace, and the Mothers had many consolations, which they appreciated all the

more from having had so long to wait. Thirty-four more young prisoners were sent to Nazareth in 1861 from Marseilles. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia received them in person, as was her practice when new prisoners arrived. She used to see for herself that everything was ready, proper food prepared, the beds comfortably arranged; she then met them with kind, friendly words and open-hearted charity. The contrast of such manners to those long accustomed to nothing but tones of reproof and command, had, of course, the desired effect. They worshipped her, thought of her as their Mother, but a Mother invested with the hitherto unknown charm of piety and Christian charity. Mother St. Euphrasia cherished a wholly supernatural love for the most abandoned characters. These youthful prisoners appealed to her sympathy, for enclosed within a moral barrier which confines them within themselves, a barrier far more dismal than prison walls, their degradation seemed to these poor girls to shut out from them every ray of sunshine coming from the outer world. To be branded with public infamy, to be shunned and put out of sight as dangerous, ever to have the world's condemnation dinned into their ears, of that world that has spurned them and put them under lock and key, must be for youthful hearts a dire penalty, producing not only hatred, but desperation. Feeling themselves spurned by the world, which not infrequently has held out to them sin in its most alluring aspects, they are but too naturally prone to curse their lot and to be

lost to all good impressions. Then it is that the light of heaven, shining from a kind, devoted, and cheerful person like Mother St. Euphrasia, fosters the revival of better feelings. It is like the return of spring after the dreary frosts of winter.

Mother General devoted her whole soul to this work at Nazareth. Her joy grew apace as its good results became apparent.

On the 20th June 1852 she wrote to the Superior at Avignon, Mother Mary of the Divine Heart Lionnet:—"Never has the Institute founded such a work as Nazareth."

By this time she had transformed one of the halls into a chapel, and a chaplain had been appointed to serve it, M. Poulet, who was shortly after succeeded by M. Berruet. But this provisional Oratory soon was too small, and she then began to build a chapel, which the Bishop, Mgr. Angebault, blessed on 23rd December 1853.

Few houses had to undergo so many trials as that of Nazareth—trials the heart of the Foundress felt in all their bitterness.

But the servant of God was stronger than her crosses, and by faith was raised above all events, even the most painful.

She was not content with paying visits to this establishment; she wrote letters to her daughters at Nazareth when trials fell upon them.

"My Sisters Mary of St. Xavier and St. Euphrasia," she wrote to the Superior and her Assistant,—“Oh,

how dear to me you are, my daughters of Nazareth ! Yesterday's procession made me forget all my troubles. Nazareth is saved ! Nazareth is blessed by Jesus ! Poor children ! how it grieves me not to have been there. For ten days I have lived on Calvary ; my heart is full of sorrow ; but I pray and labour for you. Good-bye, my children, you are my comfort."

In the midst of a lawsuit about Nazareth she wrote to the same two Sisters—

"The good God has chosen you to complete the great work at Nazareth, the work dearer than life to me. Your last letters, your dispositions of affectionate obedience and humble poverty, the clear accounts you give me, are my consolation. God be praised ! Alas ! how much I need consolation ! You know the devil has been at work again, and has revived that dreadful lawsuit. I have already undergone an examination before a lawyer, which lasted three hours, and was unspeakably humiliating. May Jesus and Mary be praised in all. The eye of my soul was fixed all the time upon the adorable Child Jesus and on my two victims at Nazareth. I am in peace, for something tells me that on Christmas night deliverance will come. Do you not think so too ? We are sending several things for your little crib. You shall have the beautiful altar-cloth on Monday. Be sure and keep yourselves warm, my poor children."

At the time of another painful trial she wrote to the same Superior—

"Pray earnestly for me, for truly I am in the garden

of Olives with our Divine Master, forsaken and condemned to reproach just where it is hardest to bear. Oh! pray for me that I may know how to suffer and be silent. Let us never cease praying. Let us keep close to the Blessed Sacrament and in the Heart of our Mother the Blessed Virgin."

There were peculiar difficulties about enclosure at Nazareth. It stood in the midst of fields which were to be the scene of the children's labour, but through which neighbouring land-owners had a right of way. It was, however, always Mother Pelletier's wise and enlightened practice to yield to necessity, whatever might be the attendant annoyances, in order to gain the one great object of the Institute, the conversion of sinners. From this point of view, it seemed to her better to leave Nazareth unenclosed than to give up the work there.

The following letter is to M. Le Boucher, Superior of the Good Shepherd:—

"MY VERY KIND FATHER,—Are you still disposed to let me go to Nazareth with you to-morrow? If you are, I will take with me a Sister altogether neutral; one who, knowing nothing of my troubles, will leave God and you to act. I will help you with all the energy of my heart and will, which belong to you more fully than you think. I am so strengthened by God on this point, that I can protest before angels and men.

"Much as I and good Sister Xavier (whom I saw yesterday) desire the enclosure, I think, before we

decide to establish it, we had better come to a mutual understanding. Sister Xavier thinks so many of the Sisters will have to go outside, that if only the remaining few were subject to it, a little clique would be formed. But, dear Father, you have the grace. I have not been to Nazareth for a month; yet I love the work more than life, still I suffer in secret."

During all this time, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia continued to add to her convent, and to decorate it with statues and altars dedicated to our Lady and the saints. M. de Neuville had often told her that he had seen the Blessed Virgin floating over the Good Shepherd in the midst of a brilliant light having the appearance of a ball of fire. She had always wished to commemorate this vision by some lasting memorial, and about this time she laid her plan before the Community. The idea was eagerly grasped, and every one in the house, religious and penitents alike, wanted to have their share in the work. To gain a few extra sous and have a little alms to help "the good Mother," as she was called, became the ambition of each; fingers flew with lightning speed over the sewing in order to gain this object. The statue was bought and placed in a pretty niche prepared for it, the pedestal of which contained the names of every inhabitant of the house. To give special solemnity to the blessing of the statue, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia invited Mgr. Angebault to perform the ceremony. He came, and said mass at an altar the Mother had had erected in the Community room,

which had just been put into repair, and was decked with appropriate pictures, such as the Good Shepherd and the Divine Shepherdess. The Bishop preached a sermon to the Community on devotion to the Guardian Angels.

The mere embellishment of her convent did not satisfy Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia. In thus surrounding her daughters with holy pictures she gave them the habitual sense of living in the company of the saints. She was very assiduous, too, in obtaining spiritual favours for her convent, and taught her daughters to use prayers suited to their needs. On the 4th March 1855 she obtained from Rome the favour of an indulgence of 100 days for them every time they kiss the silver heart they wear hung round their necks, reciting the following prayer:—

“Jesus, Divine Shepherd, Mary, our good Mother, cover with your powerful protection our most Holy Father the Pope, and our Mother the Church; by your loving-kindness save our souls, and those of the sheep confided to us. Take pity also on the faithful departed. Amen.”

Just at the very time when Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia was most aware of the lack of capable subjects for the various foundations already in existence, she received a despatch from the Austrian Court, informing her that the Emperor Francis Joseph and his mother, the Archduchess Sophia, wanted to confide a House of Refuge, which they intended to establish in the Austrian Empire, to the care of religious of the

Good Shepherd. The Minister of State who wrote was charged, on the part of these august personages, to address a formal demand to Angers, and to name the sum that would be paid for the maintenance of each prisoner; he was also to select a suitable house and furnish it with whatever was required for its well-being. Besides this letter, Cardinal Rauscher also wrote to Mother General; he assured her of his protection, and told her he, and many pious souls, looked forward to seeing the Good Shepherd established in Vienna.

Nothing could have been more agreeable to her than this new call upon her zeal. It was in the following graceful form that she announced the good news to the Community: "During meditation, I saw the Blessed Virgin; she had in her arms a little girl, whom she put into mine. It was still swathed in its swaddling bands, but while I caressed it, it grew large and beautiful. The child, my dear daughters, is the house in Vienna."

A chapter was summoned, and four religious were selected to make the foundation. The Mother fixed the day of their departure, so that they might begin the work on the 8th September, the Feast of our Lady's Nativity; and before they left took them to the feet of the Blessed Virgin, that they might, as it were, receive from her the keys of the Austrian Empire.

She soon had letters from them describing at length all the incidents of their reception: the Cardinal's

kind welcome, that of his coadjutor, and of the Ministers of State. M. de Starkenfels, Aulic counsellor, superintended their installation. They further gave an account of their first visit to the parish church; it took place just as the parishioners were leaving after Mass, and the people returned into the church to be present at the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament given by the rector of the parish to bless the arrival of the Sisters. For some time they continued to hear Mass there, their own chapel not being ready.

The house allotted to them was at Neudorf, a village at two leagues' distance from Vienna. It was an old episcopal country-seat, and for fifty years had been untenanted. It was situated among wooded hills; the air was good and pure, and altogether it promised well for the work.

In ten years' time Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia had at Neudorf a very numerous family—penitents, Magdalens, and prisoners, altogether there were 150 persons in the house. She afterwards created an Austrian province, of which Neudorf was the headquarters, with three dependent foundations—Suben, in Upper Austria; Gratz, in Styria; and the house in Vienna.

There is an old historical link between Anjou and Austria, to which perhaps was partly due the kindly welcome given to the Good Shepherd by the Imperial family, which, through the Dukes of Lorraine, is descended from the house of Anjou. The Dukes of Lorraine and of Anjou always kept the Faith; they

were foremost in the wars of the Crusades, and in every noble knightly cause. They were friends of art, and sometimes artists themselves; they were the first who introduced the Renaissance into France, and brought from Italy to Angers in the fifteenth century, painters, sculptors, and men of letters. The hot blood of the Plantagenets which ran in their veins was tempered by the sincerity of their religion. They founded many convents, built many churches and hospitals. Angers itself, good King René's own city, was for centuries so rich in monasteries and religious that it was another Rome.

The Austrian nobility, like that of Anjou, treated the Good Shepherd with affectionate devotion, and gave the Order several remarkable vocations. The second Mother-General of the Good Shepherd was an Austrian, Mother de Coudenhove.

The letters of the religious tell of many delicate marks of attention they received; of the visits of the Archduke Maximilian, who built them a large church and became their protector. The young Empress sent ornaments for the church; Princess Lichtenstein, Princess de Metternich, and Countesses de Meierhove, Esterhazy, Lebzeltern, Bombelle, Strasalda, and many other members of the Austrian aristocracy, came to visit and help them. All this attention, and true kindness, was inspired by the beauty of their mission and by their remarkable skill in fulfilling it. The work allotted them to do was difficult beyond all others, viz., the care of prisoners.

The first sixteen who were brought to them were afraid of them. They did not know they were religious, thought there was something unearthly about them, and actually shrieked in their terror. The good Sisters managed, however, to reassure them, and led them to present them to the Good Shepherd at the foot of the altar.

"It is quite impossible," they say, "to give you any idea of the impression this first entrance made upon us. The white, thin faces of these poor sheep, stamped with vice and misery, excited in us the deepest pity. Day and night we heard the horrible clanking noise of their chains whenever they made the slightest motion. And would to God that were all! but alas! we very soon perceived that the chains which bound their souls were far stronger, far more horrible."

As soon as the first party of prisoners became somewhat accustomed to their new life, sixteen more were sent, then sixteen more, and so on up to the number of 160. They were under sentences of five, ten, or twenty years, for crimes of every description, and in the most utter state of ignorance with regard to religion.

Meanwhile the people of Vienna were anxiously awaiting the issue of the experiment, which was deemed somewhat too hazardous. Grave fears were entertained for the Sisters' safety, for the public was aware that these same prisoners had hitherto been guarded by soldiers with drawn swords, and it was

reported that only a short time before they had even broken out against the soldiers and fought with them.

“We alone are without anxiety,” wrote the nuns to their Mother. “We have taken refuge under the protection of our God, who has often changed wild beasts into meek and docile lambs.”

Faithful to the method taught and followed by Mother Pelletier, the religious by slow degrees won the poor children, who learnt self-respect and tidy habits, almost insensibly, by constantly living in an atmosphere pervaded by order, neatness, and cleanliness. Natural human feelings, only dormant within them, began to be awakened by the consistently kind and delicate treatment bestowed on them, and they soon began to trust the Sisters, and to open their hearts to them; then grace fell upon their souls, and, with its heavenly dews, brought back to life the withered flowers of virtue.

In Easter week a preacher came to unfold to them the great truths of religion, they having been previously prepared for the sermons by the Sisters. It was the spark that rekindled the faith of their childhood. Fear of hell, and sorrow for sin, began to stimulate them. The sermons were interrupted by sobs, at night the children were heard praying, and finally most of them went to their duties and received their God into souls reconciled to Him in the tribunal of penance.

“O Heavenly Spirit,” say the pious nuns, “show us what miracles of mercy were then performed.

Magnify for us the God of mercy who has pardoned all their sins."

It was an entrancing sight for the daughters of Mother Pelletier; a sight incomprehensible to worldlings, to those, at all events, who, unlike a religious of the Good Shepherd, trace not the wondrous progress of a soul rising gradually from sin on its way to God.

After Easter, a great change was visible in the prisoners. Those who had talked, screamed, or quarrelled all day long, were now perfectly quiet and busy over their work; those who would scarcely obey a guard of armed soldiers were now docile to the slightest sign from a gentle, defenceless religious. They themselves could not understand the change that grace had operated in their souls.

The Government, touched by this success, gave the religious leave to introduce some mitigations of prison discipline, and in consequence some prisoners asked not to leave the Home at the expiration of their sentence.

Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia and her work were by this time renowned all over Germany, and Catholics and Protestants alike were moved by the wondrous charity of the new Institute, which went out to seek the lost sheep, looked for abandoned souls, and brought them home to lavish care upon them, elevate them by constant daily kindness, and purify them by contact with purity.

St. Francis of Sales in one of his gracious parables tells us that hares grow white when they live on snow-clad mountains. Mother St. Euphrasia had

attempted and accomplished the sublime task of purifying and beautifying fallen souls, by bringing them into daily contact with the virgin spouses of Christ.

The eyes of more than one Protestant were opened by the mere contemplation of this spectacle, so striking in its novelty, so marvellous in its results. Among these converts from Protestantism, was Countess Hahn-Hahn, who paid a visit to Angers, and asked to be received as a postulant. But she was not called to the religious life, and returned to Mayence, her native place. She had, however, conceived such an admiration for the work of the Good Shepherd, that, in conjunction with Mgr. de Ketteler, the Archbishop, she spared no pains to obtain a foundation for Mayence.

It was in January 1854, that, in the midst of snow which whitened the banks of the Rhine, Mother Pelletier's daughters arrived at the beautiful convent which Mme. Hahn-Hahn had prepared, and where she received them herself with the affection of a sister and with all the attentions of true charity. She had bestowed special care on the decoration of the chapel and the furniture of the Sacristy. She discovered other ways of showing her zeal, and by her writings spread abroad the fame of the Good Shepherd in Germany. Her books were much liked by pious people, and through their influence many excellent workers rallied round the Institute.

CHAPTER XX

FOUNDATION IN INDIA

1854

Mother Pelletier sends her daughters to India—Foundation at Bangalore—Mgr. Charbonneau—Mother de Schorlemer—Mother Pelletier's journey to Paimbœuf with the missionaries—Farewells—Letters.

FOR half a century Anjou has produced an unfailing supply of missionary labour. There is scarcely a foreign mission which has not some priest sent from a seminary in Anjou.

The College of Combrée was the first to give an example of vocations to the apostolate of the Indies. A professor of this establishment, missionary at Mysore, and since titular Bishop of Jassen, Mgr. Charbonneau, was in 1854 evangelising a province of the East Indies. Amid these idolaters he soon perceived that the surest way of winning souls to the Catholic religion was to work upon them by charity, and to set forth to them the Gospel of Christ in the living form of self-sacrificing charity. He bethought him of the daughters of Mme. Pelletier, of that nursery of missionaries he had seen planted and growing in the soil of Anjou.

She, who from early childhood had dreamed of going to the end of the earth to spread abroad the love of God, gladly received the Bishop's request for religious; her council also willingly agreed to it. The only difficulty was to select subjects, for no sooner was the good news made known in the Community, than every one wanted to be sent out to devote their life to the Indian missions. To know the will of God, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia had recourse, as was her wont, to our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament.

The religious whose name she submitted to her council as Superior of the new foundation at Bangalore was Sister Mary of St. Teresa, Mdle. Fanny de Schorlemer, a German belonging to one of the oldest and best families of the Westphalian aristocracy, a family ever distinguished for loyalty to the faith.

Sister Mary of St. Teresa's brother, Count de Schorlemer, one of the best speakers in the German Parliament, belonged to the Catholic party of the Centre, and was a supporter of M. Windthorst in his brave and successful struggle against the *Kulturkampf*. His portrait was to be found side by side with that of M. Windthorst in every Catholic household of Germany. "Every Schorlemer is hard-headed," he said, "but my sister Fanny is the strongest *man* of the family when it comes to strength of will. When, at twenty-six, she announced her vocation to our parents, she gave them a fortnight to think it over and consent to it."

There had been no lack of the heroic element in

the vocation of Sister Mary of St. Teresa, and it was now her burning desire to devote herself to foreign missions; to go to Mysore rather than to the convent at Mayence, near her home. She had renounced the world, with all joys and gaities, to enter the cloister with its poverty, its mortifications, and this with such generosity that the Good Shepherd soon became her true home. "God and His Angels dwell here with us," she said.

Her more than common love of the convent became very evident when the time came for leaving it. Realising then that never again should she see those cloisters, her heart nearly failed her. She kissed the dear walls and almost clung to the doors, as if she could not leave the hallowed place. But above all else there, she loved Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, the mother who had made known to her the sweetness of her profession, the celestial charm of the cloister.

Mgr. Charbonneau was at the Good Shepherd on the final day, and travelled thence with the nuns appointed to the mission, two of whom were Irish, two French, one (Mdle. de Schorlemer) German. The prospect of separation from her beloved missionary Sisters caused such grief to Mother Pelletier, that that servant of God made up her mind to travel with them to Paimbœuf, where the embarkation was to take place.

The journey from Angers to Nantes was a delightful spiritual treat, for Mgr. Charbonneau beguiled the way with many stories of his work at Mysore, the listening Sisters almost fancying themselves already

among the poor heathens, who, not knowing the true God, but feeling the necessity of worshipping something, adore loathsome creatures, even serpents.

At Nantes, Mgr. Charbonneau was received with honour and respect, by priests and faithful. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia and her daughters were the guests of the Sisters of Wisdom at St. James's Hospital. Here she went to the bedsides of the sick, encouraging some, exhorting others, but everywhere leaving behind her the impression of her great charity. The Superior had given her a room with a window looking into the Sanctuary, and to Mother St. Teresa another close by, in which, all through the night, Mother St. Euphrasia heard her sobbing and crying. Thoughts of the long farewell to the Good Shepherd at Angers, of the parting from her under whose care she had begun her religious life, of the responsibility that would be laid on her as Superior of the foundation, overpowered her, and nature asserted itself in many tears. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, who was deeply moved by these involuntary signs of emotion, only waited for Mass to be over, then went to Mother Mary of St. Teresa, and proposed that some one else should go to Bangalore in her stead, and that she should go to one of the German houses, to be near her family and give them the joy of sometimes seeing her. She said all this with every mark of the tender feeling which prompted her, describing in touching terms to her daughter how glad her family would be to see her in a German convent, and, on the other

hand, the crosses she would meet with at Mysore, and the loneliness of her position as Superior. But the night was past, and with it the terrors which were very likely the devil's last effort to deter Mother de Schorlemer from fulfilling her generous resolve; she had heard Mass and had received Holy Communion; our Lord Himself was fortifying her soul. Never had she been so strong, nor felt her Indian vocation so irresistible.

"Since I have been to Communion," said she to Mother Pelletier, "I feel strong enough to cross seas, to brave fire, flames, everything to save one single soul in India. I shall have crosses; but, with St. Francis Xavier, my heart cries out, 'More, Lord, yet more.' I go full of joy." And while speaking, her face was radiant with joy.

At Paimbœuf Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia was the guest of her niece, Mme. Gautier, wife of a former king's notary. M. and Mme. Gautier had two children, who seemed unable to do enough to show their affectionate reverence for their grand-aunt, who, on her side, treated them with the greatest tenderness.

On the morrow, Captain Joy, of the vessel in which the voyage was to be made, called to take the religious on board, and once there, they set to work to arrange their cabins and settle everything in them, Mother General herself helping them. She also commended them to the kindly offices of the sailors, whom she propitiated in favour of the "five white Angels," as they called the nuns, by presents of money.

The vessel was delayed in harbour by bad weather, and Mother Pelletier was obliged to return to Angers before it sailed. Then came the last touching good-bye. All through the journey from Angers to Paimbœuf the fellow-travellers of the religious had been remarking with admiration the cordial relations existing between Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia and her daughters; but when it came to the parting scene on the shore, it seemed as if the demonstrations of affection would never cease. The Mother turned first to one then to another over and over again, embracing them, impressing her last recommendations upon them; then all would begin again, more tender words for each, as if each were the special object of her love. At length, however, she crossed the gangway, and when her hand was lifted from the chain that served instead of a rail, Mother Mary of St. Teresa kissed the places where it had rested, and then, so soon as she was out of sight, stooped and gathered some of the pebbles she had trampled under her feet, to keep for her sake. They were more precious in her eyes than diamonds, and being a skilful artist, she afterwards covered them with pretty designs.

Shortly afterwards, in the saloon of the boat which was conveying Mother Foundress and the two religious, her companions, back to Angers, a touching scene was taking place—the Mother, dictating to one of her daughters a farewell letter to her Mysore missionaries, and pouring out the overflowing fulness of her heart.

“Good-bye, my dearest Sister Mary of St. Teresa,

good-bye, my beloved children. You are weeping, and from my eyes are raining tears. Look at the ocean, my children; and then you will know the depth of my love, and of my sorrow. When the waves come and kiss the sides of your ship and break against it, will it not remind you of your poor Mother's last embrace and of her grieving heart? Storms, the swelling of waves, all these things will be images to you of her troubled soul when she parted from you. How generous you are to God! and, my children, how dear you are to me!

“How loving you were yesterday! Dearest Sister St. Teresa, when, looking at the moon, you said to me: ‘Every evening, when we stand on deck, I shall greet it as my friend, and say to myself, “Perhaps just at this very moment my Mother is looking too at the moon from her little window; and she will certainly be thinking of us.”’

“And, my children, when I see the moon in her beauty, I shall say, ‘Thou who art more lovely than the moon, brighter than the star that guides them, bless them, keep them from the dangers of their course, calm the waves of the ocean, guide them in safety to the port, O Mary!’

“You will be resting in your hammocks, and I shall be placing you in the heart of our Lord. I shall never miss a morning, and as soon as the door of the Divine Tabernacle opens, I shall lay my five treasures at the foot of the holy ciborium. Our prayers will follow you everywhere. At Nantes we

will go to Communion in union with you. Afterwards we shall write to you. It is not my trembling hand that writes this, but my heart dictates it all."

A lady friend who had accompanied Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia from Paimbœuf to Nantes was the bearer of these touching lines to the missionary Sisters. Some persons of distinction who witnessed the leave-taking between the Mother and her daughters, afterwards congratulated her on the dignified and religious bearing of her daughters, and on their mutual affection.

"We could never have believed," said they, "that any Superior could love her religious so much and be so tenderly beloved. This Community is really like one family."

At Nantes a letter from Angers, which was a terrible blow to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, awaited her. It contained news of the defection of a religious in whom she had put the utmost confidence. Nor could she refrain from fearing that this was but the forerunner of greater crosses to follow, for she had often observed that any important foundation, especially abroad, was always coincident with a grievous trial of some kind, as if Satan, in his jealous fury against one who snatched many souls from his tyranny, was determined to make her suffer.

Her niece, Mme. Georgina Pelletier, lived at Nantes, and was so anxious to have her as a guest, that, although she had hoped by staying at the Hôtel Dieu to hide her grief, she was obliged to yield. Her niece

and her children treated her as an honoured and beloved guest, but she could not touch food, and spent the whole night in meditating on the Gospel, especially the passages which tell of our Lord abandoned in the Garden of Olives. The sublimity of her thoughts, and the heartfelt fervour with which she made her acts of resignation on foreseeing the advent of crosses and humiliations, deeply edified her companions.

Meantime the religious still detained at Paimbœuf, were making use of their time by taking different lessons, one in medicine and surgery for the mission, another in music and singing for the chapel. The servant of God was able to write to them at the Island of Bourbon so that they might have news of the dear Mother House once more before landing in India. But she had to wait many months before she could have letters from them. In the sixth month she began to feel some anxiety, and every day turned over all the letters that came, looking in vain for one with the expected foreign postmark, but none came till the Eve of the Assumption, at the very end of the sixth month.

That day Mother-General held a chapter for the feast. "My dear daughters," she said, "I can hardly speak . . . my emotion must be too evident for you not to have guessed that I have something to tell you. Well, so it is, my children. I have had news from the Mauritius. Your dearest Sisters, for whom you felt such great anxiety, are safe."

Then she read the letter, giving a touching account

of all the trials undergone by the five missionaries on the voyage between St. Nazaire and Bourbon, of the dead calm which had for days detained them beneath the burning skies of the Equator. They had suffered much, but the remembrance of their Mother, of her lessons, the hope of carrying the Gospel to their Indian mission, upheld them. After reading the letter, Mother Foundress intoned the *Te Deum*, which was then sung with emotion by the Community.

That very day, August 14th, the five religious were arriving at Bangalore, after travelling a fortnight in an Indian cart, drawn by oxen, through a country desolated by drought and cholera. Water was scarce, and night lodgings were still scarcer. Mgr. Charbonneau accompanied by his clergy awaited the nuns at one of the gates of Bangalore; he also had the bells of his church rung, and the *Te Deum* chanted; he then took the Sisters to his Seminary, which had been arranged for their reception. Here the little colony of "white ladies" soon organised their Community, with its appointed places for prayer and the classes modelled on those of Angers.

An Indian Christian prince, whose ancestors had been converted by St. Francis Xavier, came to visit the Sisters with his wife and daughter, and brought them presents.

The work was an encouraging one, for two classes were started in the first year; the first, under the patronage of St. Euphrasia, was for little native girls, and daily increased in numbers; the religious under

whose charge it was, learning Malabar under the tuition of a lad of twelve.

The second, in which English was spoken, was only for European girls. In a few months it numbered sixty pupils, all of whom earned their living either at embroidery or plain sewing. There were but few among them at that time whose families could afford to pay for them. In course of time, Protestant girls, growing accustomed to seeing the "white Sisters," would ask their parents to let them attend the Good Shepherd.

But more religious were soon needed to keep up the work, and letters to this effect were written to the Mother General, "who had not her equal in the world." She was told of all the good that might be done, of the beauties of the country, of its exceptional climate. There was no danger even of snakes, because they stayed in the temples, "where they were worshipped; nor of monkeys, who went skipping about in troops on the trees, but never came near dwellings."

CHAPTER XXI

THE SPIRITUAL JOYS AND VIRTUES OF MOTHER PELLETIER

1854-1855

Beatification of Germaine Cousin—Devotions to her at Bourges and at the Good Shepherd—Mother Pelletier's charity—Young prisoners—Abbey of St. Nicolas—Immaculate Conception in 1854—Bologna—Forgiveness of injuries—Foundation of Provinces—Cardinal Wiseman—Chili.

ON the 7th May 1854, the Vatican Basilica was prepared and decorated for the celebration of a great function. His Holiness Pius IX. was about to canonise several saints. In the transepts of the great church, two newly-painted pictures, representing religious of the Good Shepherd, had just been placed. In one, a Sister making bread stands before a kneading-trough; near to her, another shows baskets full of dough, and huge loaves already in the oven, to the procuratrix. The picture in the other transept represents the Mother Superior of the Bourges Convent pointing to sacks so full of wheat that they seem almost to burst, and above them hangs a medal of Venerable Germaine Cousin.

The Superior is surrounded by other Sisters in

white, one standing astonished, the other by her gesture expressing gratitude, a third on her knees.

Venerable Germaine Cousin was to be beatified, and the miracles obtained through her intercession in the bakehouse at Bourges, had been approved among the four required for the cause of beatification.

Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia had followed the course of canonical procedure with grateful interest, and in her spiritual conferences had often spoken of Germaine Cousin's great humility. It was her delight to present the little Shepherdess Saint to her own Shepherdesses, as their model. She had her statue placed in the cloister at Angers, and in honour of to-day's (7th May) great function at Rome, had caused it to be surrounded by lights and flowers.

The privilege conceded to Toulouse, of celebrating a feast of the first class, in honour of the Saint, was now also granted by Rome to the convent at Bourges, where a solemn Triduum of thanksgiving in her honour was celebrated at the conclusion of the ceremonies of beatification. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia went from Angers on purpose to take part in this Triduum, and Cardinal du Pont, who had shown her great respect and attention at her first visit to Bourges in 1852, was present for its close.

The Sisters were greatly edified by the Mother's devotion to the Beata. Yielding to an impulse of grace, she prostrated herself before the trough in which the miraculous dough had multiplied, and carried away a little piece of it, to be carved into a

cross, and hung up in the bakehouse at Angers. The Sisters at Bourges, by her authorisation, undertook to pay the cost of a veil to cover the reliquary at Pibrac. When alone one day in their chapel, she thought she heard Blessed Germaine's voice asking for an altar in the convent, which accordingly she had erected without delay.

On her return to Angers, she hastened to multiply there also the signs of her devotion to the beatified Shepherdess. In the choir of the religious she had an altar erected, to which was suspended a tiny loaf made of the miraculous flour. She had also a painted statue, representing the miracle of the flowers, placed in the bakehouse.

Every year, on the 15th June (or on the Sunday following), the Sisters employed in the bakehouse form a procession, and carry the Saint's relics in the beautiful reliquary presented to Mother Foundress by her daughters at Poitiers. She used always at harvest-time to have a sheaf of corn, gathered at Nazareth, placed before the statue in the cloister. By degrees she came to regard Blessed Germaine as the Saint to whom her daughters ought to go for their daily bread. Later on, when she opened another class at Angers, she called it after this Saint.

Only a few months after the rejoicings at Bourges, cholera broke out violently in that convent. In ten days there were thirty cases.

Immediately this sad news reached Angers, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia assembled the Community,

and appealed to their devotedness to help their afflicted Sisters, with the result that every religious in the monastery fell at her feet begging to be sent.

She selected ten of the older and more experienced in sick nursing, and M. Vallon, the Prefect of Angers, telegraphed that day that they might be expected on the morrow.

They found sickness and death holding sway in the convent, but charitable and devoted friends had rallied round the afflicted.

The Archbishop, priests, nuns, the Prefect, doctors, all were united in a common effort to stay the dreadful malady, and daily reports were sent to Mother Foun-dress, who watched the course of events with painful interest. She sent a circular letter to all her houses to ask for prayers, and several sent help according to the measure of their resources.

Her letters to those on the scene were even more tender and affectionate than usual; they were those of one suffering actually with those whom she addressed. Three Sisters were attacked by the pestilence.

“MY BELOVED DAUGHTERS,—The sorrows of death have encompassed you. Poor Sister Mary of the Seven Dolours! Poor Sister St. Frederick!¹ What losses! what victims! How I weep for them! But they live in God. And all our poor children! Nine! oh, how I tremble still! It is indeed an awful visitation!

“Here, all your Sisters are stricken by the news.

¹ Two Sisters who had died.

And you, my dear Sister Mary of St. Elias, what has become of you? My good Sister St. Adelaide, write every day; I beseech you to do this, my daughter, if only a couple of lines. We pray so much for you, my poor desolate children. We shall write to you either to-morrow or this evening, according to the time of the posts. YOUR SORROWFUL MOTHER IN OUR LORD."

Three days later she wrote again:—"My dearest daughters, your two most touching letters, which came this morning, brought tears to many eyes. You are indeed with our Lord in the Garden of Olives, and drinking of His chalice. My beloved daughters, what devotedness on your part for all, old and young alike. What shall I then do, in return, for you? The Lord Himself is your recompense. I have no words to express my immense gratitude towards your holy Cardinal, the Prefect, and your excellent doctor; I shall never forget them, nor will you, my devoted children, you are the joy of your devoted mother."

For a whole month there was a constant exchange of touching letters between the houses of Angers and Bourges, between the daughters and that Mother who bore in her heart the solicitude of all her family. Typhoid fever followed cholera, and not until February was the monastery at Bourges free from sickness.

While still in the midst of these sorrows, news came from the Vicar-Apostolic of Mysore that one of her daughters in India was dead, the first in that far-off land. Then came a letter from M. Clémot, a

missionary at Bangalore, giving such beautiful details of the death and funeral that the Mother General had them published in an Angers newspaper and sent to all her houses.

The funeral of the humble pious religious was like the triumph of virginity among the heathen. Her body, exposed upon an open bier by the Bishop's order, was carried through the streets of Bangalore upon the shoulders of Irish soldiers, upon whom crowds pressed, eager to catch sight of the face that still wore the sweet traces of a holy life. The virginal body seemed to be wrapt in the sleep of the just. It was followed to the grave by more than 1500 persons of every kind of religion, all honouring the religious as one who, sent by Heaven, had left home and country to educate and help Indian girls. Heathens and Catholics alike pressed forward to cast into her grave, in token of respect, a handful of blessed earth. It became even necessary to guard the cemetery lest the grave should be ignorantly profaned with Pagan offerings of incense, flowers, and fruit. It was for Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's daughter (as she learned afterwards) that the priests of the church in Bangalore, for the first time, went through the streets chanting the prayers for the dead.

Letters were written to her saying that her daughter would do far more for the Pagan people of Bangalore by her death, than any religious could in a whole lifetime. The Indian native is of an impressionable temperament, and the ceremony, which

resembled a triumph rather than a funeral, would remain fixed in his memory ; the church not large enough to contain the crowds who pressed in ; the Bishop, in the majesty of his pontifical vestments, with his deacon and sub-deacon ; in the centre the high catafalque, the open bier, the young religious reposing there amid lights and flowers, the girls surrounding it also carrying flowers.

A few days after the funeral a good-hearted old Pagan woman, whose daughter, baptized by a missionary, had been a pupil of the deceased Sister, came to the convent with an offering of wax candles, flowers, and incense, " For the honoured Raniastri (virgin) who is dead," she said weeping.

This foundation gave Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia more courageous confidence than ever in God's providence, and she continued, without respite, to extend her work. It had long been one of her desires to enlarge the convent at Angers, so as to make room for a separate house for the young prisoners, with facilities for them to have a special rule. In describing the Good Shepherd at the beginning of this work, mention was made of the Abbey of St. Nicolas, a beautiful building of the last century erected by Benedictine monks, which can be seen standing out against the sky on a hill to the west of the Good Shepherd. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia could see it from her cell. It is of immense size and beautifully situated ; beneath it lies a deep sheet of water fringed with wild uncultivated growth, and seeming remote from all civilisation. On

the north it overlooks the wide meadows of the Department of the Maine, and farther still, beyond poplars and willow plantations, its horizon is bounded by the vineyards of the left bank of the Loire. The monk could withdraw into the solitude of the rocks bordering on the lake, and be undisturbed in his austere meditations on penance; or from his cell, he might reflect on the more consoling tokens of Divine providence beholding a beauteous and varied landscape, the prospect of the fairest and most fertile portion of Anjou.

Mother St. Euphrasia could not have fixed upon a house better suited to her purpose than this monastery with which many memories were connected. Founded A.D. 1020 by Fulk Nerra, Count of Anjou, on his return from Jerusalem, it had been dedicated to St. Nicolas, in fulfilment of a vow made by the Count in a storm, during which the sailors had invoked the protection of that holy Bishop. Fulk chose the site one day when, looking out of the windows of his castle, he saw two doves flying to and fro between the town and the bushes that covered the hillside, building their nest. He looked upon this as a sign from God that his vow was to be fulfilled. Benedictine monks from St. Aubin at Angers were the first inhabitants of the abbey. Geoffrey Martel, the son of Fulk, embellished the house, and built a basilica in connection with it, which Pope Urban II. consecrated in 1096 when preaching the Crusade in Anjou after having proclaimed it at Clermont. At that grand

Catholic festival, it may well have been that for the first time the walls of St. Nicolas echoed to the strains of the beautiful French epic, the "Song of Roland." To Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia the old convent seemed a hallowed relic of Benedictine life in the days of its greatest fervour. Generations of monks had prayed within those walls, and to restore the abbey to religion and to God's service was a pious work after her own heart, and one she was happily able to accomplish, as just about this time there were several religious at the Good Shepherd with unusually large dowries. The project was, of course, recommended to the prayers of the Community, and the purchase was completed on the 30th November 1854.

The next thing Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia did was to send a band of religious to St. Nicolas to clear away rubbish, and to arrange and adapt the abbey for use. It had been neglected for years, had suffered during the Revolution, and was a mass of ruins, dust, and briars. She herself acted as clerk of the works, often visiting them and requiring an account each evening of the day's progress. The Sisters employed there left the Good Shepherd before daybreak and returned only at nightfall. Later on, the Mother General obtained leave to connect the two convents by a tunnel which ran under the suburb of St. James. She was thus enabled to govern both houses herself. For several months, pick and spade in hand, the Sisters cleared the ground of rubbish, discovering many bits of sculpture, statues, and other precious Benedictine remains,

the most interesting of which Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia placed in a small museum.

A cross was erected on the spot where the high altar of the basilica formerly stood, and by Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's orders the statue of St. Nicolas was placed over the works. She was anxious to perpetuate devotion to the Saint in the monastery; a building having been once dedicated to a Saint, it becomes, as it were, a point of honour to cling to that Saint's protection whatever the changes in the inhabitants. Men soon pass away; that which is of heaven alone is stable.

Friends of the Good Shepherd and antiquarians frequently came to St. Nicolas while the work was going on, the former to admire the beauty of the locality and the Sisters' industry, the latter to collect interesting specimens of the art of the twelfth and following centuries. At one time it was M. Godard Faultrier, a well-known archæologist, who came to study coloured mouldings, carved foliage, bassi-relievi, and the pillars of a church of the eleventh century consecrated by Urban II. At another, it was Count Theodore de Quatrebarbes, who came with his wife to admire the wondrous progress of the work, the beginning of which his pious uncle, M. de Neuville, had befriended.

But to no one did this goodly extension of the monastic premises give greater delight than to the Mother Foundress. On 10th February 1855 she wrote to Mother Lionnet, Superior at Avignon: "While

writing to you in this fine weather I can see our beautiful Abbey of St. Nicolas. How splendid it is! Our Sisters are still working there.”

But at the close of A.D. 1854 a happiness far exceeding that of the acquisition of the old abbey was granted to the prayers of the servant of God. On December 8, Pius IX. promulgated the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Ever-Blessed Virgin. The little office of the Immaculate Conception had for some years been daily recited at Angers before the morning meditation, and in the garden stood a statue of the Mother of God conceived without sin. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, whose desire it was to be buried in a chapel dedicated to the Immaculate Conception, had frequently prayed to God for the promulgation of this dogma. It was her delight to repeat these words frequently, “Thou art the joy of Israel,” and to address them to the Most Holy Virgin.

The 8th December 1854 was therefore a day to her of great joy. A few weeks later, on Sunday, 31st December, all the churches in Angers were illuminated in honour of the promulgation of the dogma; and to the west of the town, where the hillside slopes down to the Maine, illuminated lines were conspicuous against the dark sky; nowhere else were lights so numerous as from the huge illuminated buildings there, our Lady’s many titles shining in transparencies from the windows. It will scarcely be necessary to say that this was Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia’s monastery celebrating a festival long desired. Her

daughters had learned from her the tenderest devotion to the Mother of God conceived without sin. One of them (a former pupil of the Sacred Heart), who had been sent to Imola when the foundation was made, had often acted as secretary to Pius IX. whilst staying in his palace. She had also sometimes mended his pens (he used quills); and in memory of these slight services, before the Bull was signed, she sent the Holy Father a quill she had cut and ornamented, with a request that he would, as a very great favour, deign to use it to sign the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. To this he consented. Mention was made of these facts in the archives of the Community by order of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia.

Everything that spread devotion to the Blessed Virgin was a source of happiness to her. Thus it was on the 16th July 1854, the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, that the Good Shepherd took possession of their fifth convent in Italy, that of Bologna. A few months later, her daughters, conscious of the pleasure they were giving her, wrote to tell of their having borne the Blessed Virgin's statue in triumphal procession to a niche in their grand staircase, underneath which was inscribed this legend, "*O Maria, concetta senza peccato, pregate per noi*" (*O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to you*).

The convent at Bologna owed its foundation to the zeal of M. Pini, a parish priest, who enlisted the generous aid and sympathy of Cardinal Oppizoni and of the parochial clergy to open the house for penitents.



Dubut, phot., Angers.

MONUMENT DE L'IMMACULÉE CONCEPTION
ÉLEVÉ PAR LA R^{de} MÈRE MARIE DE S^{te} EUPHRASIE PELLETIER
DANS L'ENCLOS DU MONASTÈRE

Pius IX., as protector of the Good Shepherd, encouraged the undertaking.

Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia took religious from Imola for this foundation. The house chosen for it pleased her, as, like St. Nicolas, it was an old convent. It had even been used for converted penitents, and dedicated to St. Margaret of Cortona. Hence the religious were enabled to impart to their Mother General the good news that they had found under their cloister two fine statues—one of St. Margaret, the other of St. Mary Magdalen. The founders of this house started under the most favourable auspices, nor did these good Sisters fail to share their joy with their Mother.

Cardinal Oppizoni was devoted and kind. The clergy and the faithful took an interest in their work. The first penitents were glad to enter, and soon felt the influence of grace, and then themselves set actively to work to try and convert their families or their friends who were leading sinful lives. While lulling the passions of their stormy past, the calm of the cloister gave them peace of mind, and inspired a longing for a pure and holy life; and the inherent tendency of virtue being to banish selfishness, and make us share our joys and happiness with our neighbour, these penitents, in becoming good and pious, were changed into zealous apostles.

It was one of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's constantly recurring experiences that virtue is contagious. This was the very principle upon which all her vast

and beautiful plans for the sanctification of sinful souls was based. For this very reason they were to be brought into her monasteries to live among the pure and saintly, and she found over and over again that her devotedness had an irresistible power over the most hardened hearts.

A Jesuit father once brought to her a lady of whose past he told her only that she was well born, but had fallen from one misfortune into another. Something made the mother receive her with even more than usual cordiality. No benefactress could have been made more kindly and graciously welcomed. In the course of time she learnt that the lady who had in the past eloped with the companion of her guilt, had done all she could to ruin a certain convent of the Good Shepherd. This news at once explained to her the curious sensation of joy the lady's arrival had caused her, and made her more than ever solicitous to supply all her wants. She let no day pass without paying her a visit, sent pretty furniture to her room, and delicate food such as she thought she might like. There was no possibility of resisting this unwearying kindness. The lady began to feel remorse, and at last, under the influence of charity, right feeling was fanned into life. It was a new spring after a hard winter. But with regard to her name and her past life she was still absolutely silent.

At length a day came when Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, sending for her, said, "My poor child, it is useless to keep up this silence any longer. I know

all about you." She only burst into tears and fell on her knees. The Mother raised her and said, "Yes, dear child, I know all; but just because I do know, you are dear to me, and I want to save your soul. You must remain with us." "But, Mother, they threaten not to pay for my board." "Do not mind about that, my child; it does not matter. Stay with us. We love you, and do not want to hear anything more about payment."

Shortly after this the same lady was talking to the directress of the Magdalens; it was her wish to join them. "Your Mother," she said, "is a saint; she spoke to me of things that I had never told any one on earth, things she could never have known by mere human means."

On the following day Mother-General said to the same religious, "For some time, God has certainly given me many lights about that soul."

From that moment the lady made great progress in virtue. She had a great devotion to the Passion of our Lord, and every day made the Way of the Cross, shedding tears so copiously that she could be traced at each station. Her family wished her to return to them, and she was at last obliged to yield to their wishes. Then the servant of God put the finishing touch to her generosity. Nothing had been paid for board, but she gave her both money and clothes for her journey. In the course of time the lady, bereft of all her relations, wanted to come back and end her days under the blessed roof of the Good Shepherd,

near the revered Mothers who had done so much for her soul; but Mother Pelletier advised her either to stay in the world or else enter a convent near her own home.

In a diocese where there was a convent of the Good Shepherd, a gentleman of good position, influenced by a person hostile to the Sisters, sent Mother Pelletier insulting letters. Three weeks after writing the last of these letters he died, and a lady, a relation of his, wrote these words to one of the Sisters at Angers: "After a short illness my cousin has been taken from us. There was, however, time to give him the last Sacraments. My grief is very great. Will the Superior General in presence of a tomb remember?" The religious went to Mother General to know what answer she should send. "My child," she answered, "I gave you the letter without reading it; tell me what was in it?" While the Sister read it to her great tears fell from her eyes. "No, no!" exclaimed she; "I do not remember. I always thought him an excellent man. He was deceived. Write to his family; tell them how I sympathise with them, and that tomorrow all the Community will go to Communion for his soul." Then correcting herself: "But your letter will not arrive soon enough. The poor man's cousin will spend a miserable night. Let us send it by a messenger;" and it was sent accordingly that evening.

The family, people of position in the diocese, were deeply touched by this conduct, and ever afterwards

showed the greatest esteem and veneration for the servant of God.

The Good Shepherd, now a widely-spread Order, had, as we know, houses in France, Italy, Germany, England, India, and America. Its growth had been attentively followed by Pius IX., and he now proposed the establishment of provinces; this, he thought, would facilitate the government of the houses, multiply vocations, and would also rank the Institute among the other great Orders which have provinces. This desire of His Holiness, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia hastened to fulfil with as much alacrity as if it had been a command.

First assembling her council, with them she drew up a suitable petition, praying the Holy Father to allow the division of the Institute into provinces. The decree for their erection, dated 21st July 1855, was accordingly issued, and Mgr. Angebault, Bishop of Angers, as apostolic-visitor, was deputed by Rome to confer first with the Superior-General and her council, and then to lay proposals before the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars as to the mode of carrying the decree of 21st July 1855 into execution.

This was an important event both to Mother Foundress and to the Institute. It was essential that each Provincial should take with her and carefully preserve the spirit of the Mother House, so that, in spite of differences of nation or peculiarities of individual character, it should always be recognisable. Mother Mary

of St. Euphrasia, in choosing her Provincials and forming them, applied herself, therefore, to carry out the instructions upon these points which she had asked for and received from Cardinal Barnabò:—

“On the choice of Provincials and their counselors depends the life or death of the Congregation. Let your Mother choose subjects after her own heart, and let them be herself in miniature; her very thoughts should pass into those of whom she makes choice, that all may be of one mind, and one heart. Let her at present divide the provinces only according to the number of capable subjects she possesses, subjects who combine all the necessary qualifications. It were better to begin with only three or four, with the possibility of subdivision a little later. Above all, the Provincials must be attached to their Mother and to their Mother House. Great care must be taken not to confide this important trust to those who have not this spirit.

“Tell your Mother that it is Barnabò who gives her this advice. She will do well to keep near her for a fortnight, those upon whom her choice may fall, that her spirit, her plan of government, may pass into them, and that matters may be so arranged that there may be uniformity and, above all, union. Let the first Provincials be so thoroughly formed that those who succeed will only have to follow in their steps; and above all, let them have such intimate knowledge of affairs that when they arrive at their respective houses they may know exactly what course to pursue.”

No counsel could have been more in harmony with the Mother General's own desires. She felt that the greater the distance between the heart and the members, the greater the need of perfect union in order to live and attain growth. The statutes for Provincials which she drew out, she sent to Rome for approval. The Provincial, her counsellors, and the Superiors of every house were to be nominated by the Superior General, but the Provincial was to appoint all the other religious of her province to their several offices. Each province was to have its Novitiate. Every year the counsellors of each province were to inform the Superior General of the state of their province; the Provincial was also annually to visit the houses of her province.

For France, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia obtained that there should be only one province, of which the Provincial and her council were to remain at the Mother House. For Italy, the provincial House was to be at the Convent of the Holy Cross at Rome; for Piedmont, at Turin; for Germany, at Munich; for America, at Louisville; for England, in London; for Africa, at Algiers.

The English Provincialate was erected at the cost of much annoyance and difficulty to the Mother-General. Cardinal Wiseman thought national susceptibilities would be offended if an English convent were subjected to a foreign Community, and asked to be allowed to name the Provincial himself. A lengthy correspondence ensued, his objections alarming

the Mother as an attempt to loosen the hold between parts of the work which might in the long-run cause ruin to the whole. Her English daughters were no less dear to her than those of France, and the very efforts called forth to keep them under the conditions common to the Community increased this affection. Danger to the whole Congregation seemed to her to be involved in the Cardinal's proposal.

Having contended so strenuously for the institution of a Superior General, seeing therein the sole means of extending her Institute, and of enabling it to do all the good of which it was capable, she was alarmed for the stability of her work. For the sake of peace, however, she adopted the conciliatory course, and left the choice of Provincial to His Eminence.

The religious in London rejoiced with filial exultation in this solution of the difficulty; they had doubly suffered, dreading danger to their house from the Cardinal's opposition, yet sharing Mother General's fears. "Our winter season is past," they said, and to celebrate the event, they sang a solemn *Te Deum*.

Cardinal Patrizi wrote as follows to Mother Foundress:—"I congratulate you sincerely upon the union established between the Mother House and the English houses. I highly approve of your having left the choice of Provincials to His Eminence, Cardinal Wiseman; your delicacy in thus acting will serve to make him always more inclined to view the Congregation favourably."

The year 1855 was one of special joys and blessings to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia. A new field of labour was opened to her daughters in Chili, a country thoroughly Catholic, where the faith of the inhabitants promised them a plentiful harvest. The faith, which is deeply rooted in the soul of the Spaniard, ever maintains in him a love of holy things and of religious virtues; it inspires him with admiration for the monastic life, and confidence in the protection it diffuses. The Chilians, genuine Christians of Spanish blood, could not but be attracted and won over by the devotedness and zeal of Mother Euphrasia's daughters. They have so multiplied houses of the Order, that the Provincial of Chili, who delights in calling herself the youngest of Mother Pelletier's children, is constantly busied with new foundations in Spanish South America.

In the end of 1854 the envoy of the Archbishop of Santiago, Dom Frias, arrived at the Good Shepherd. He was commissioned to ask for religious to be sent to Chili, where a large convent was prepared for them. He brought with him money to defray the costs of their voyage and outfit. This appeal greatly touched Mother Pelletier, and, although scarcely able to supply existing foundations with subjects, and besieged with requests for others, there was something providential in this particular demand which made it almost irresistible; it would open up all South America to her zeal; the salvation of thousands of souls might depend upon it.

She chose seven religious for the mission, after conferring with her council, and, as usual, had to refuse many volunteers. Those chosen were blessed for their mission by Mgr. Angebault, who came for that purpose to the parlour. Then, on the 3rd January 1855, Mother Pelletier gathered all her religious together in the large Community-room, and here, before our Blessed Lady's altar, with candles lighted, all kneeling, the seven missionary Sisters pronounced their vow of fidelity to the Mother House and of union with it. The Mother General's joy was intense. "Chili," she kept repeating, "is the mission of my love."

That evening the departure took place. In Paris, Dom Frias gave the nuns Spanish books, and accompanied them thence to Havre, where they embarked on board the *Costa Rica*, a sailing vessel which was to take them to Valparaiso. Just before the ship left the harbour, Dom Frias asked the Sisters to come on deck to bid a last farewell to their country, the country of their beloved Mother Foundress.

It was not till the 28th May, Whit-Monday, that she received their first letter, which filled her with emotion. She had it read aloud at mid-day recreation in the garden, relishing in silence the holy joy of beholding the interest her daughters took in the vicissitudes of their Sisters' voyage across the ocean. Would we picture to the life the soul of Mother Pelletier in its most vivid joys and affections, we should read with her the narrative of her absent children.

She is ever with them, sharing in turns their joys and sorrows.

In the Gulf of Gascony the *Costa Rica* had encountered a heavy gale. The seven missionary Sisters hearing the noise of the waves, the creaking of masts and rigging, feeling the ship heave and toss, thought their peril imminent, and knelt to pray before a crucifix, the gift of Dom Frias, their Superior, invoking Our Lady of Fourvières, and before long the storm subsided.

One lovely morning, when the sun was shining gloriously over the vast ocean which lay spread before them in the majesty of its immensity, its gleaming, ever-changing waves inundated with sparkling light, they saw an American war-frigate approaching. As it drew near the *Costa Rica*, the band of the frigate began to play. The music, travelling over the waves, had the most moving effect. It was like some celestial harmony falling from the heights above on that vast solitude. Eyes and ears alike were charmed. The religious sense of the infinite, which music produces beyond any of the other arts, was here enhanced by the spectacle of the ocean, that created image of the Infinite. Pure souls, conscious of God revealed, yet hidden, by His creatures, find a religious enjoyment in giving themselves up to the emotions inspired by nature and art.

Cape Horn, so often fatal, was doubled without the slightest accident. The Southern nights were lovely, and the religious used often to sit out on deck and

lose themselves in meditation, under the influence of the glorious firmament, shining with stars of greater magnitude than any they had ever seen before, and of the sea teeming with life—seals, porpoises, and fish of all sorts disporting themselves in it. Then Angers would rise up before them, and thoughts of the beloved Mother who had trained them to be missionaries. “How often,” they wrote, “how often, seated on one of the benches, we have talked of our dearest Mother, of our Sisters, whom we shall always love. When we watched the glorious sunsets, it used to comfort us to think that our Rule, our holy Constitutions, are in full vigour at every hour of the day and night.”

As the ship approached Chili, our missionaries strained their eyes to catch a first glimpse of the land where they were to exercise their zeal. At last they caught sight of State Island, a wild, bare rock, inhabited only by seafowl.

“On the 13th March, day a thousand times dear,” they wrote, “because it is our loving Mother’s feast, we knock at the door of the Heart of Jesus and of His Virgin Mother. Our prayers mount to the skies, prayers many and fervent; and we feel humbly confident that they are not rejected.”

On board ship the Sisters had edified the captain and crew. One of the latter (M. Vincent, second mate) had given them some fruit and other provisions which his mother had prepared for his voyage. Their farewell to the *Costa Rica* was a touching scene, for the whole ship’s crew gathered on deck and waved

to them even after the little boat in which the Sisters landed had disappeared from sight.

They were met by missionary fathers and conducted to the Convent of the Religious of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, who possessed the only flourishing religious educational establishment in Valparaiso. The next day the titular Bishop of Suliopolis came to see the Sisters. "Welcome to South America," he said. "Here many children stand in need of your help. Your fame has already gone abroad over the world. Your reputation is good; try not to lessen it. You are more needed on Chilian soil than anywhere, for the empire of evil here is very great. No doubt you will have interior sorrows, because your mission is an arduous one; but you will also enjoy many consolations, for the women of the country are generally pious. Their misery, the result of disorder, is the cause of bad conduct. How glad I should be if I had a house here for you, and could keep you in Valparaiso. You would soon have over 300 penitents; they would gladly put themselves under your care."

But San Felipe was their destination, and thither they proceeded. Upon their arrival at Santiago, they were first received by the Picpus Sisters, then by the Poor Clares, with whom they stayed a month, and who waited on them with devoted attention, as the ambassadors of their Lord. They were received at the cloister door by the Abbess, pastoral staff in hand, and, with her Community, she conducted them, by

paths strewn with flowers, to the chapel. Here the *Te Deum* was sung, with harp and piano accompaniment. The French and Chilian Sisters had no common language, and understood one another only through Don Blas Carnas, a priest who acted as interpreter. It was touching to see the handful of French religious surrounded by the Chilian Poor Clares, the bond of union being that of fraternal charity. The leave-taking was full of mutual regrets. It seemed as if the house of the Poor Clares were plunged into mourning by the Sisters' departure. They left, after being blessed by the Archbishop, and went to their own house, escorted by large crowds and eight carriages, sent by the richest families of the place. The progress of the procession was attended with much solemnity. All the bells in the town rang to celebrate the Sisters' arrival at their convent, and when they reached it, a *Te Deum*, with accompaniment, was sung.

But the crowd presently dispersed, and then the Sisters found themselves face to face with ruin and disorder. The house had been inhabited by *Beate* nuns of very relaxed rule, who had left everything in confusion. But the daughters of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, setting vigorously to work, soon produced order. Nor was their work restricted to the mere material fabric; they accomplished the far more arduous task of bringing six of the *Beate* back to the severity of their religious life, and had the consolation of seeing them persevere under the discipline of the

Order of the Good Shepherd, thus fulfilling words prophetically spoken by the Foundress of their convent. One winter's day when walking in the garden, she had said to the Sisters, pointing to some blossoms out of season on a half-withered pear-tree: "The *Beate* will end like that tree; but many pious souls will come in their place and blossom and bear fruit."

But, in spite of consolations, the hearts of Mother Pelletier's daughters returned again and again to Angers and the Mother General. During their weary voyage the sails of the vessel, made at Angers and bearing the manufacturer's trade-mark, had constantly awakened heart-stirring memories. On the receipt of their Mother's first letter, the Superior, when she opened it, was greatly overcome. At its first words all were in tears, and asked to have the leaves divided among them that they might read them at leisure. Distance from our native country endears it to us the more. An absent mother is felt to be the more needed as one feels the impossibility of recourse to her. The good Mother St. Euphrasia was never more tenderly loved than by this Chilian colony of her children.

CHAPTER XXII

HER ZEAL AND HOLINESS

1855

Mother Pelletier's zeal for young criminals—Mother Pelletier among the different classes—Her zeal—Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament—Constantine—Her love of work—Her devotion to the negro race—Her prudence.

SOULS like that of Mother Foundress have the faculty not only of overcoming material obstacles, but of making other people share their convictions and lend their aid to plans they would otherwise dismiss as chimerical.

Thus the tunnel between St. Nicolas and the Mother House had not only to be bored for some distance through solid rock, but to pass under the Nantes high-road, for which leave was necessary. This, however, through Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's widely extended influence, the Prefect, M. Vallon, and the Mayor of Angers obtained, and then, without further delay, she set a band of workmen to the task. From May to August they blasted the rock and dug out the passage; and on the twenty-sixth day of the latter month, Mother General had the happiness of conducting the whole Community through the tunnel, still

encumbered with rubbish, to assist at the ceremony of blessing the new building of St. Nicolas.

A still greater joy to her was to light once more the lamp before the Blessed Sacrament; not, indeed, in the former church, which had been pulled down, but in the monks' refectory, transformed into a chapel, which M. Joubert (the Superior) came to bless on the 28th August. Preceded by two children carrying lighted candles, he afterwards went to the tunnel and blessed it. Mass was said in the chapel on the 29th.

Mother Pelletier's delight was to revive all the old religious functions in the ancient abbey. In the month of September she organised a procession in honour of our Blessed Lady. Starting from the chapel of the Good Shepherd carrying banners, it wound its way through the gardens and tunnel, and then through the paths of the grounds of St. Nicolas, rejoicing the Mother's heart as she heard the River Maine and the deep lake echo back the chant of the psalms. A very solemn effect was also produced when, assembled on the beautiful abbey terrace, the whole Community sang the *Magnificat*.

The tunnel was completed by the end of September, at an outlay of 20,000 francs, a work undertaken by Mother Pelletier for the reason which had first induced her to buy the abbey, that of giving the fullest possible extension to her beneficent work. There were now 300 prisoners, and Nazareth was full to overflowing; thirty had for some time been quartered at St. Nicolas, and attended Mass at the outer chapel of

the Good Shepherd. To them and to the whole class, the establishment of a chapel at St. Nicolas and the piercing of the tunnel would be an immense benefit. Frequent visits from the Mother, constant communication with the Mother House, would foster the connection between both. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's zeal for the class was contagious. Canon Leroyer (who afterwards entered the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament) at the very beginning begged to be appointed chaplain of these poor girls.

Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia called it "St. Joseph's Class;" she visited it assiduously, watching over it with the deepest interest, and carefully noting the progress in learning and moral education.

The methods of moral instruction she followed were not those of so-called philosophy; she loved, above all, to follow out those methods furnished by our Divine Lord Himself, viz., the Sacraments. She caused them first to go to confession, that the past might be put aside, and then again and again recommended it that the horror of sin might be instilled. She chose her chaplains with great care, in order to have devoted men for the work. She speaks of this in the following little note to M. le Boucher:—

"MY CHARITABLE FATHER,—I am worried, and I must worry you. I have 200 children asking me for bread, and I have none to give them. I have, therefore, recourse to their kind father.

"Has a chaplain been appointed for us? Will he

come soon? Our children have not been to confession for two months. Please send me just a line, Reverend Father; that will satisfy me.—Ever yours, most respectfully, MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA.”

She showed her profound knowledge of the human heart by laying this stress upon the benefits of frequent confession. The constant practice of making acts of the detestation of sin causes the horror of sin to become gradually habitual in the heart. At the Good Shepherd, where frequent confession is the general practice, generous and efficacious resolutions are more easily formed. It often happened that the prisoners who arrived were found to be far more ignorant than guilty, and gradually, under the kindly, charitable treatment of the religious, their minds expanded with the growth of religious knowledge. They felt the genial influence of their new atmosphere, brightened by the sunshine of charity. They were trained to manual labour. Some worked in the garden, while others were taught needlework.

Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia forbade the use of corporal punishments. It was her joy to help these young girls to prepare for the Sacraments as they became fit to receive them. She also took great pains to interest the town authorities in them, particularly M. Vallon, Prefect, who, accompanied by the Council of the Department, used to visit the Abbey. His wife came, too, sometimes with her little children. She greatly admired the Good Shepherd, and the

interest she and other ladies of the town showed in the work delighted Mother General.

It happened sometimes that when their term of imprisonment expired, the poor children dreaded leaving the monastery, and facing the world with its many dangers, as much as they had once dreaded imprisonment. Transformed by continual contact with the gentle influence of the religious, and aware of their own weakness, the terrible contrast between the hard, wicked world and the sweet, maternal discipline of the home they were in, made many desire to stay beneath that charitable roof.

Thus a new project gradually developed in Mother Pelletier's mind. A special class, under the patronage of Blessed Germaine Cousin, was formed, consisting of freed prisoners who were unwilling to leave the Good Shepherd. It was recruited from both Nazareth and St. Nicolas, and by cases from outside, children brought by their relatives. Some of these, although they might, for a time, have had the misfortune to stray from the right track, once brought under the charm of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia and of her work, were always unwilling to part from her, and thus in the various sections of the Community the number of those who desired only to live and die under her maternal direction was ever increasing. The Community was, in fact, becoming a congregation of tribes drawn together by the cords of her charity, a charity which seemed always to deepen in intensity as it widened in extent.

In 1855 her thoughtfulness for the welfare of her

daughters was made evident in various ways. She had the kitchen-yard covered in, to shelter those preparing the vegetables, and, to give the sick more air, she had an additional room built for the Infirmary. She would often visit the kitchen herself to make sure that the portions were large enough and served hot. Provisions were very dear, but she would have neither change nor diminution made in the food of the Community. She was, in short, not only Superior of the convent, she was also the tender mother of every member. Each inhabitant of the Good Shepherd was to her a beloved child, over whom she watched that nothing for body or soul might be wanting.

She was ever thinking of the good of souls. She established a retreat for each class of the Community, and Magdalens, prisoners, penitents, freed and preservation children, had each their special preacher. The German Sisters' retreat was preached by a German Father. Obstacles were nothing to her where the good of her flock was in question. No temporal good had for her any value in comparison with that of a soul; she would have spent money without reckoning, and taken any trouble to secure peace of soul for any child under her care.

An Irish girl in the house, who could speak no French, was, it became apparent to her mistresses, suffering from some great spiritual uneasiness. "I have a great sin on my conscience," she said, weeping while she spoke, "and I want to confess it." There was, at that time, no priest in Angers who could hear

English confessions, but Mother Pelletier heard that at Saumur (about fifteen leagues from Angers) one was to be found, and sent off one of her religious for him in a carriage, in which the priest was to return to Angers, while the Sister remained in the convent at Saumur. He came, heard the confession, and went away leaving the girl restored to peace of mind, which she owed to the Mother's charity.

Mother Pelletier taught her daughters to have this same devoted zeal for souls, speaking to them of it, in burning words, as the principal object of their vocation. The following notes are a summary of her exhortations on the subject of zeal:—

“Take this child and nurse him for me.

“These words, my dear daughters, addressed by the daughter of a great king to the mother of Moses, are not they repeated also to you by a great Queen, the Holy Church? To you she confides her children, those whom the world rejects, but whom she receives with a mother's love. Oh! how she honours you in associating you to our Lord Jesus Christ, in His own special mission!

“And what became of Moses, that little child, destined apparently to perish in the waters of the Nile? He became the deliverer of the people of God. What also may become of the poor penitent placed in your hands? She may become a true Magdalen, a Thaïs, a Pelagia. My beloved daughters, what a beautiful mission is yours! But how necessary prayer is to its fulfilment! Each of us should

offer for this intention all our sacrifices, all our trials, all our mortifications, all our good works, and thus consecrate every moment of our lives to the salvation of these precious souls. The spirit of charity should be the motive of all your actions. Whether you say the office, sing or work, you should have in view only the glory of God, the good of souls. What a joy it is for me to hear you all sing together the Divine Office, especially on festival days! It inspires me with such devotion that I weep for very joy. I believe your piety, and fervour, do much for the conversion of souls.

“See how God loves those precious souls. He seems to perform miracles in the Institute for them only. For their sakes we are sought after in every quarter. Everywhere people say to us, ‘Take this child.’ We may truly say that we owe our vocation itself to these lost sheep, for, without them, our Congregation would have no existence, and all the benefits we receive are bestowed on us only in consideration of what we do for them.

“My dear daughters, may you understand better and better the full extent of your obligations to those dear souls. This is my wish for you beyond all else. Do your very best to accomplish your fourth vow in all its perfection. It may be summed up in two words, *zeal and charity*. I ask you to reflect upon it, and again I ask you to reflect upon it. For you, entrance into the kingdom of God can be obtained only by charity and zeal. The Apostles had

these virtues and wrought wonders. Ven. Father Eudes had them, and founded not our Congregation only, but other institutions besides. M. de Neuville had them, and succeeded in founding this house of Angers, the cradle of our Congregation, whence have issued so many other houses to be havens of salvation to a multitude of souls. These are the virtues which urge the venerable Bishops, who ask for us, and all founders and benefactors of our Order. And of Madame d'Andigné, our great benefactress, one who had no other thought but of the good she might do, what shall I say of her charity, her zeal? and of so many others who are continually giving admirable proof of theirs?

"If now and then you see some poor child's soul soiled by contact with the world (to say no more), do as that holy woman did who with her own veil wiped the holy Face of her Divine Master; and presently you will see poured out upon that soul the precious and purifying Blood of the Lord.

"Yesterday I visited our good penitents' class, and the dear children showed me how they share in our labours. They said to me, 'Oh, Mother, how much you must love souls never to tire of working for them.' 'My children,' I replied, 'now speak frankly to me. I feel persuaded that in the depths of your hearts, not only you do not really look upon our work as one of great suffering, not only you do not think of it as likely to cause our death, but on the contrary, you think of us as very fortunate in

being able to do such a work.' Their only answer was tears of emotion.

"Our fourth vow constitutes, as one may say, the essence of our vocation. It is that vow, my dear daughters, which gives you the impulse to fly upwards, and sends you to distant shores to conquer souls for God.

"Why do the Novices learn English, German, Italian? Why do the English and Italians learn French, that mother-tongue of all, as one of our dear American daughters calls it? Not to acquire an accomplishment for themselves, but that they may use it for the conversion of more penitents.

"Love all your penitents, of whatever country they may be; devote yourself with all possible zeal to their happiness, and thus rejoice the Heart of Jesus, the Heart of His Blessed Mother, and rejoice also the Church of God, which has inherited the love of Jesus and the love of Mary for souls. 'Take care of these little ones,' she says, 'and I will give you your reward.'"

It was in 1855 that Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia celebrated, for the first time in her chapel, the exercises of the Perpetual Adoration. It was her desire that they should be conducted with all possible pomp and solemnity. The altar, the walls of the church, were therefore decorated for the occasion as upon the greatest feast days. Her devotion to the Holy Eucharist was her life's support, and in her spiritual conversations we find many fervent exhortations upon love for our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. It was a subject to which

she often recurred as the feast of Corpus Christi approached. The following extracts are from notes of her discourses preserved by the religious:—

“To-morrow, my dear daughters, will be the feast of the Most Holy Sacrament, and although the solemn ceremonies will be deferred until Sunday, we ought not to forget that the Thursday which follows the feast of the Most Holy Trinity is properly the day set apart by the Church for the renewal of the memory of the institution of the adorable Eucharist, our loving Redeemer having instituted this Divine Sacrament upon that day of the week.

“I know many of you grieve that it should be so deferred, and particularly our Italian and German Sisters, who have been accustomed to see it celebrated on Thursday in their own countries; it is only in France that it is deferred to the following Sunday. I own to you, my dear Sisters, that every year I feel the same pain; but remembering that the feast is deferred in conformity with arrangements sanctioned by the Church, we should be resigned. The present arrangement is an article of what is called the *Concordat*. It was allowed as a necessity, in order to save our holy religion from great disasters, for at that time it was terribly assailed in France. Holy Church, our Mistress, guided in all things by the Spirit of God, thought right thus to condescend, without, however, by so doing preventing her truly faithful children from recognising that Thursday is the proper day for the feast of the Blessed Sacrament.

“ Try, during these hallowed days, to keep yourselves very recollected. Clothe yourselves with the Spirit of Jesus Christ; imitate His life of silence, of sacrifice, of zeal; His life of obedience, poverty, humility. Make your hour of adoration with all the fervour you possibly can. Try not to make the least noise, in order to please God, and be very careful not to cause any distraction to those of your Sisters who feel drawn to unite themselves more closely with Him in the delights of prayer.

“ The works of our Congregation are very dear to every one of you, and you would like them to grow rapidly; but if rapid growth be desirable, solid growth is still more so. And where are we to look for the strength that is to make our works solid? We must look for it where only it is to be found, at the foot of the altar, asking for it there from our Lord in the stillness of meditation, in the shadow of the Tree of Life. There must we go for strength; and the class-mistresses especially should often have recourse to this source: they have such anxieties to live through!

“ Remember, my dear daughters, our Institute owes its origin to the Holy Eucharist and its development to our Blessed Lady and St. Joseph; and we must go to our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, to the Blessed Virgin, to St. Joseph, for the courage and zeal we need to conquer souls.”

The world, beholding the vitality of the Church in the way it has spread over the whole earth, its works of

charity and of education, cannot discover the source of this life which survives so many persecutions. The power of this persecuted one, who has followed to the grave every one of her persecutors, is a problem insoluble to the philosopher, illumined only by human science.

So, too, the works of the saints baffle the wisdom of man. When, as in the case of Mother Pelletier, they are made manifest in undertakings transcending the ordinary power of genius, even the wise men of the world, confronted by a problem which for them admits of no solution, are amazed.

This solution is to be found in the Eucharist, that is, in the ever-living Presence of Jesus Christ in every part of the Catholic world. This, too, is the secret of Mother Pelletier's power, the explanation whereof consists in two things, devotion to the Eucharist and devotion to the Blessed Virgin which, in the world's estimation, are utter folly.

She very rarely, either through illness or fatigue, lost an opportunity of receiving Holy Communion. Sometimes, when hardly able to move, she might be seen almost dragging herself from her cell to go to Holy Communion. When travelling, she would fast until very late in the day to have the consolation of receiving her God. And after Communion, while still the living dwelling-place of her Divine Lord, her whole exterior gave token of an angelic piety that greatly edified her daughters. They thought it a heavenly favour to see her make her thanksgiving; it was like

watching some seraphic being to see her absorbed in recollection. Those were the moments she talked with God and fortified her soul, moments in which, while conversing with our Lord, she took many of her most important decisions with regard to foundations.

"God inspired me to do so in Holy Communion," she often said to her daughters.

A Priest who was long her director said: "If she showed her lively faith in her manner of prayer and of hearing holy Mass, she seemed ravished with ecstasy when she went to Holy Communion. And still more when making her thanksgiving; she seemed then to be utterly lost in God. At such times, in her wondrous self-surrender to Jesus Christ, she received the clearest lights as to how she was to act in affairs of importance; she found answers to her difficulties, explanations of everything that she had not understood. I have often heard her say with the greatest simplicity, 'I will ask our Lord about it while I am making my thanksgiving.' When she said this, I always knew that her doubts would vanish, and God would enlighten her."

When she spoke of the Holy Eucharist, her tone of voice bore witness to her emotion, and showed all the delight she experienced. Her religious felt she was presenting the living God to their love, the God whom her own heart had learned to love habitually as the sole object of its worship.

She had, moreover, taken such delight in studying the dogma of the Holy Eucharist that her daughters

might have gathered from her conferences a comprehensive treatise on the Blessed Sacrament. In the first place, she had been gifted with a deep insight into the special connection of her work with the Divine Eucharist.

Jesus Christ stays hidden but living in His Sacrament, to wait for pure souls who come to partake of the Bread of eternal life. Now the mission of the religious of the Good Shepherd is to purify souls, to make them worthy of this heavenly banquet. By their vocation, and their fourth vow, they become the servants of the Holy Eucharist, and their office is to help to purify the souls who are to have the happiness of receiving it.

When they succeed in bringing one of their children to that purity which renders her fit to receive the God of the Tabernacle, their task, their glorious, their angelic work is done. To watch that the heavenly banquet be well provided with guests wearing the spotless robe is their duty. They are angels on earth, guardians of the Feast of the Divine Lamb.

Again, the Eucharist is the model of the religious of the Good Shepherd. Hidden under the sensible appearances of bread, shut up in the Tabernacle, but ever living, ever active in doing good in the silence of His prison, Jesus Christ is the Pattern of the Good Shepherd nun, active in the solitude of the cloister, busy all day long in the silence of her convent, removed from the noise of the world, uniting Martha's life to that of Mary.

Mother Pelletier explained to her daughters why they should prefer devotion to the Holy Eucharist, that is, our Lord Jesus Christ, living and really present in our midst, to all other devotions. We cannot see the saints, and therefore have their statues, but only to excite interior devotion.

"Here," said Mother Pelletier, "I ought to make an observation. It would not be right to prefer habitually to pray before a statue of the Blessed Virgin rather than before the Blessed Sacrament. This is a thing young novices might do; they often feel a kind of attraction to this devotion for which they could not themselves account; but it is not pleasing to our Lady. Rather let your devotion to her be founded on your devotion to the Holy Eucharist. I might say the same thing of devotion to St. Joseph and other saints. You should take care to discriminate between the figures of things and things themselves, and reflect (as you already believe by faith) that the Son of God dwells substantially and really, as true God and true Man, in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar; but Mary, Joseph, and other saints are not really present in the images which represent them.

"You are aware that the prayers we address to our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, begging graces of Him who is the source of every best gift, are wholly different from those by which we ask the saints to intercede for us with God to obtain for us the graces we desire.

"Still, you ought to have a great reverence for the

images of the saints, as they incline us to invoke their protection; a thing most pleasing to God, as He has deigned to show by numberless miracles.

"It is far from my purpose to discourage you in this pious devotion. I mean rather to make it more solid by the very love for the Blessed Sacrament which I recommend to you. At the Feet of Jesus, Whom you should perpetually strive to imitate, you will learn how to honour the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph, to whom, as you know, He rendered such honour Himself.

"You will often go, therefore, to offer your prayers before our shrines. We have erected them in token of our gratitude for innumerable benefits vouchsafed to us by our Lord through the intercession of our true Superior, our true Mother, Mary, and of St. Joseph, now elected Superior and chief administrator of the whole Congregation. You will never succeed in honouring these sublime advocates as our Lord Himself honours them. Go, then, often to visit them; be glad when you see them set to preside over the Community, and never fail in offering them the tribute of your respect, and love when you pass before them.

"Statues and images filled the heart of St. Teresa with such sweet transports that she would have liked to see them put everywhere. 'What can be more precious,' said she, 'what more to be desired, than for ever to have our eyes filled with the portraits of those we love and who love us so much? Oh, how much are heretics to be pitied, who, by their own

misguided will, deprive themselves of this consolation and of so many others !’

“ When she travelled, St. Teresa always took with her many pious pictures, and among them a little statue of the Child Jesus, which she generally carried in her arms, to keep herself and her companions in the presence of God. But when instructing her daughters she said to them : ‘ Be careful you never leave our Lord to look at His image, especially after Holy Communion ; for you see how foolish it would be if somebody you dearly loved came to pay you a visit, and you left him alone to go and talk to his portrait.’ ”

“ You have seen how the good Superior of our convent at Oran, Sister Mary of the Heart of Mary (Borel), burns with zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. You have heard her speak of her mission, and understand that, although of a timid nature, she rises above herself and surmounts every obstacle when there is question of doing good. You know that, after edifying us all, she went away yesterday, begging us to ask you to pray for her, and for the success of the important affair which was the reason of her prompt departure. She had taken measures to obtain an audience of Her Majesty the Empress Eugenie, and a telegram came announcing to her that she would be received to-day at eleven o’clock. Although this news delighted her, the dear Sister, being very timid, was much disturbed, and I could easily understand her feelings. But she took courage when she thought of

the opportunity she might have of obtaining help to save souls. 'Supposing I get only a trifling sum,' said she, 'it will always be enough to keep a few penitents.' The audience probably will last only five minutes at most; she will not be allowed to see the Empress alone. See what the great of this world are! No need of all this fuss to obtain an audience from our God. He asks us at every moment to come to Him, and we may talk to Him as long as we please. Let us go to Him on all occasions."

Mother Pelletier spent long hours before the Blessed Sacrament. Whenever she had any difficulty to solve, any decision to make, she went to the church, and there in silence opened her heart to Jesus Christ. Her daughters tell us that during these moments of conversation with our Lord she remained perfectly motionless and kneeling, not a fold of her mantle stirring.

In one of these colloquies with our Divine Lord she decided upon the foundation of a convent at Constantine. The Good Shepherd had already two houses in Algeria, one near Algiers, the other near Oran, and Mgr. Pavy was anxious that another should be built at Constantine. Mother Pelletier had, as we know, always felt a very strong attraction to the poor children of Africa, and she sent two religious from Algiers to begin the foundation.

Constantine, the ancient Cirta, became a Catholic city as early as the second century; but had long since succumbed to the power of El Islam, when the

two humble daughters of the Good Shepherd, with the divine courage of holy charity, arrived there and took up their quarters in an ancient mosque. There they gathered round them some ten penitents and pupils of diverse nationalities. The Vicar-General, who became their Superior, took them under his protection, and having persuaded Mother Pelletier to send more religious to the foundation, he moved it to a site near the town, which, with Mother Pelletier's help, he succeeded in buying.

In most of her convents Mother Pelletier's work was the conversion of those already baptized, a struggle with the devil, with results more or less consolatory ; but the victory was sometimes incomplete. In Algeria, however, abjuration and baptism often crowned her efforts. Souls rescued from Paganism were brought into the Church of God ; in other words, souls that knew Him not were brought to the perfect knowledge of Christ.

At Constantine alone, many children and adults were baptized ; and when her daughters were able to tell her that through some alms bestowed on them they had saved some poor little black girl from slavery, or possibly from death, and brought her into the great family of the Good Shepherd, her joy was full, for she believed that as the flock grew, so would He, to whom it belonged, bless it the more abundantly.

Her soul was that of a missionary. She lived in spirit with her daughters scattered over distant continents, occupied in redeeming souls, in converting sinners. She kept up an uninterrupted correspond-

ence with every one of her houses, filled with the outpourings of a most devoted religious affection. She was constantly thinking about them, and whenever she could, used to send off closely-packed boxes filled with vestments and sacred ornaments, as gifts from the Mother House.

We need scarcely repeat that her daughters' love for her in return was of the most tender, the most touching character. Separated from her by distance, they would treasure her portrait with pious care. They lived on her memory, in scrupulous fidelity to her teaching, making it their life's study not only to keep her spirit themselves, but to spread it around them.

The foundation at Bangalore had now become so overburdened with work that Mgr. Charbonneau applied to the Mother House for assistance, and three Sisters were sent out from Angers. They reached Pondicherry, but could go no farther; one of them, exhausted by sea-sickness and by illness, could bear no further fatigue. Hearing of her condition, the good Bishop sent money to the religious, and told them the sick Sister's journey was to be made in a palanquin. His charity in thus providing for her daughter, moved Mother Pelletier so deeply that she seemed never to tire of talking about it, picturing to herself, and describing to her Community, the poor sick Sister meeting the Bishop by the way, to whose compassionate heart the health of one poor daughter of the Good Shepherd seemed of greater value than

money, and who, though poor, had gone to great expense to save her life for God's service.

One knows not what to admire most, the devoted affection of Mother St. Euphrasia for her missionaries, or their tender attachment to their Mother General.

The following letter from the Superior at Bangalore, announcing the arrival of the three religious, was written on the 25th March:—

"How delighted are we to be able to calm the anxieties of our best of Mothers. A few minutes after our three Sisters arrived, we took them to your portrait.¹ Dear Sister Mary of St. Clare burst into tears, and all three covered it with kisses. It is well that it was painted in oil; otherwise this poor Sister Mary of St. Teresa would have had her work to do all over again.

"How I loved to see this feeling in them! I said to them: 'The more you love our revered Mother General, the dearer will you be to my heart.' Oh, dearest Mother, how good they all are! How glad we are to have them here!

"Now to turn to something else. I wish you could have seen your daughters' eagerness in opening the trunks you sent, and their delight, and consolation in all the proofs of the affection of the heart of a Mother who has not her like on earth—a heart whose charity, shed over the great family, binds the whole together in the spirit of fraternity and comforts the exiled members. Surely this is the spirit which pre-

¹ A portrait painted by Mother Mary of St. Teresa de Schorlemer.

vails in our dear Congregation. Dear Mother! how you do spoil your daughter, Mary of St. Teresa! Can we avoid being home-sick when we see that neither time nor absence have diminished the love which was, and still is, our happiness?

"How generous of you, dear Mother, to send the beautiful chalice, the habits, and such quantities of other things! And we have not seen nearly all yet, for the boat is leaving, and we are only writing a hurried line. I am so grieved not to be able to say more of what I feel, but my heart is filled with love and gratitude."

Only two months later came the news of the death of the first Sister at Bangalore, of whom mention was made in the preceding chapter. Three years later, the Sister who travelled in the palanquin, also died. Climate, hard work, privations owing to poverty, made havoc in the Indian Community.

Among the many joys and consolations which Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia derived from her numerous missions, the following incident is worthy of notice. In 1855 she received into the Good Shepherd eight young negresses sent to her from Egypt. They were afterwards removed to St. Nicolas. One of these children had an alarming cough, and was terribly thin and weak. A flower of the desert, our Northern climate was more than she could withstand; and, seeing how she drooped, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia felt that no time ought to be lost in having her baptized. But she knew no language but Arabic, and how to have

her instructed was a problem. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia sent, however, to Nazareth for Mother St. Francis Xavier Richard, who had been at Tripoli, and knew something of the language. For two hours this religious knelt by the bedside of little Fatima, trying to teach her the necessary truths of religion; Mother General, who had taken up her abode at St. Nicolas, waited and prayed meanwhile. At last, to her great joy, the little negress asked for baptism. Mother General was her godmother, and the whole Community assisted, while M. Leroyer, the chaplain at St. Nicolas, administered that sacrament, and explained each of the ceremonies used in performing the rite, to the great edification of the attendants. The newly baptized child made her answers through an interpreter, the Superior of Nazareth.

The day closed, at Mother General's request, with Benediction of the Most Holy Sacrament in thanksgiving. The little Christian neophyte seemed transfigured by grace and joy, but God soon took her to dwell with His holy angels. Only three days after her baptism, Mother Foundress gave her back to God, still clothed in the white robe of regeneration.

Many were the visits which the servant of God, drawn by zeal for the prisoners and young negresses, made to St. Nicolas. On July 5th, she was godmother again, this time to a young Jewess, who was baptized, taking her own name, Mary Euphrasia. On the following day she was at St. Nicolas early in the morning, to be present at the first Communion of

thirty-four girls of the prisoner class. On the 26th day of the same month she was there again for the baptism of the seven remaining negress children. The ceremony was performed, with great solemnity, by Mgr. Angebault; he celebrated Holy Mass also, and was accompanied by a numerous body of clergy. Mother General again stood sponsor, and was full of happiness.

A few days after the ceremony, one of the negresses was asked what she had been thinking of since her baptism. "I think," she answered, "that now my heart ought to belong to God alone, and that the only thing I ought to kiss on earth is my crucifix."

The progress of grace in these untutored hearts Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia watched with deep interest. "The mistresses," she told her Community, "no longer know their children, they have been so good since their Retreat and first Communion. Mary Euphrasia, my god-daughter, has not committed a fault since she was a child of the Church. Before she was very hot-tempered, but since then she has never once lost patience."

The servant of God was fond of talking to her daughters of her dear Reformatory children. On the 25th September she said to them: "The children at St. Nicolas want blankets; they will cost 100 francs. We have no money to buy them with. But let us trust in God, and buy the blankets for our poor children all the same."

That same evening a Parisian lady sent her a gift

of 100 francs. Providential coincidences of this sort are commonly to be met in the lives of the Saints. In reading Mother Pelletier's life, one is often reminded, by similar heavenly favours, of beautiful stories in the lives of the Fathers of the Desert.

In 1856 Cardinal Patrizi, the Protector of the Good Shepherd, was sent by the Pope as legate *a latere*, to represent him at the baptism of the Prince Imperial; the Pope had consented to be the young Prince's godfather. The ceremony took place at the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris, with the utmost pomp and solemnity, in presence of eighty-six Archbishops and Bishops. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, hearing that Cardinal Patrizi was coming to France, wrote begging him to pay Angers a visit. He accepted her invitation, to the immense joy of the Community, and no time was lost in setting at once to work to prepare a solemn reception for the Papal Legate. But, unfortunately, at the very last moment there came a disappointment; the Cardinal was obliged to hurry back to Rome, and to his duties as Cardinal-Vicar, without visiting Angers.

As we have already mentioned, Pius IX. did not forget the Good Shepherd, and, on the first anniversary of his election, he issued a decree constituting the house at Imola the headquarters of a province. Mother General and her council immediately appointed the Provincial Cardinal Patrizi had designated.

Mother Pelletier's activity surmounted all obstacles. July 1855 was marked by excessive heat, but she

nevertheless travelled to Poitiers on business connected with her convent. She paid her respects to Mgr. Pie, the newly-designated Bishop of the diocese, a young prelate whose episcopate promised to be one of the glories of the Church of France. He received her, as he did all who approached him, kindly and with gracious courtesy, which made the most pleasing impression. He spoke to her reassuringly of the convent in Poitiers, promising to take an early opportunity of settling its affairs. She left him with her mind at ease and comforted, and from that time forward had the highest esteem for Mgr. Pie, and a respectful remembrance of this first incident in her connection with him.

This same year (1855) the Suez Canal Company, through Mgr. Pascal Vinci, proposed to Mother Pelletier to hand over to religious of the Good Shepherd the management of the laundry and funds at the Port Said hospital. She accepted, at first only for *tourière* Sisters. She had more than once been asked to take charge of refuges established for boys or girls, but these she had prudently never accepted.

Her zeal, however ardent, never carried her into indiscreet undertakings, and was the more efficacious from the fact of her keeping within the limits of the works proper to the Institute. Wherever her daughters were, their first task was to establish a class of penitents. Benefactors frequently would have had them undertake boarding-schools and orphanages, thus opening to them the prospect of an easier life and the

pleasure of having to deal only with well-bred children. Mother Pelletier, however, always insisted on the primary importance of the penitents' class, refusing to allow the zeal and strength of the Institute to be weakened by too many varieties of work, to the detriment of the one imposed by the fourth vow.

She mentions this in one of her conferences: "Before aught else we must ever harbour the dear sheep who have gone astray amid the tumult, the dangers, the stumbling-blocks of this world, and are, as it were, unable to rise after their fall. . . . When exhorting us to fidelity in paying our vows to God, the fourth vow especially, whereby we have bound ourselves to the instruction and conversion of erring souls, 'Be assured,' says our venerable founder, 'that if you persevere in this hallowed work, you will be in very deed the daughters of the all-holy Heart of the Mother of God, who will shower down upon you every kind of gift and blessing. But if, whatever the pretext may be, you forsake this charge, you may no longer bear the name of daughters of Mary's Sacred Heart, but rather that of children of Belial; the blessing of Heaven will depart from you, and its malediction will come upon you.' These are terrifying words, and you can read them for yourselves in the preface to our holy Constitutions. But can it really be true that there is no middle course—either daughters of Mary or daughters of Belial? No, verily; no such course is possible; even as when we would stand up we cannot put one foot on the ground and hold the other up without falling.

"We must abide strictly by our vocation, by the

vows we have made, otherwise we shall fall and be lost. Let us always keep the same end in view; let us never depart from that which is the aim of our Institute, and thus we shall people Paradise and make sure of it for ourselves.

“ You are not departing from the end of your vocation when, with due permission, you admit a class of boarders, for from the beginning of the Congregation this has been done; and in our Book of Customs you will find brief rules drawn up expressly for them. But for this reason, you must be sure that you can so fulfil your duties that the care bestowed on the school children in nowise prejudices that of the penitents; otherwise you ought to give up the school.

“ As for the preservation and orphan classes, I should advise you to read over the words which the revered Head of the Church dictated in the Brief creating the office of Superior General.

“ Well then, my dear daughters, as we have already said, your orphans and boarders, if you have any, will be, as it were, the lambs of your fold. Rear them all with great tenderness, great charity; sacrifice your lives for all your flock; but, again I must remind you, that if the number of religious be limited, or the locality not practicable, you ought to keep to your penitents' class, and to it only, and by doing this you will be taking the direct road to the end of your vocation.

“ And let me impress upon you never to engage in undertakings foreign to our Institute. We have

obligations enough, and should not take upon us those that do not concern us."

Mother Pelletier often exhorted her daughters to be diligent in work, laying before them the good they might do by working for their missionary Sisters.

"My dear daughters, you work, not for yourselves, not for your own use, but for the good of souls. You are industrious, and, without thought of your own poverty, you strive to help your Sisters and our establishments. Such charitable undertakings are the object of your thoughts, and I myself day and night constantly plan new means of provision. I am happy about you while you are in this house at Angers; but your Sisters out on the battlefield, who can tell how many things they may want? who knows all they may suffer, all the privations they may have to undergo? While a Mother has her son near her, she takes care of him herself, thinks of his wants; but when the son has left her and gone forth to the battle, she can watch over him no longer. Well, this is precisely my case when my daughters go away from me. I cannot secure them their daily bread, yet I cannot help thinking of them anxiously, and nothing seems too hard when I can comfort or help them.

"Do you know what most pleases the Sovereign Pontiff in our Institute? It is the love of work, the love of a laborious life, so that not one of you fears the trouble, the fatigue our work entails.

"If we cannot do much, let us be satisfied to do little, but never to be doing nothing. Let us take

care, great care, not to become useless in the Community from inordinate love of self, of our comfort, our health. Some people are always fancying themselves ill; they have a thousand imaginary ailments, and because of some slight discomfort or inconvenience, which their excessive sensitiveness exaggerates, they do almost nothing, and make themselves a burden to others by being exacting. It seems to me it ought to be a very painful thought, when one tries to examine one's conscience, to have to say, 'I am a burden to the Community through my own fault.' No one who has a good will need ever lack means to be of use in some way or other.

"Even during recreation, novices and professed might be doing something useful. Some could go and gather the vegetables or wash them, others weed and sweep the paths; all should try not to be a burden to any one. In such ways you might help our Sisters who have the heavy work to do, and they will be thankful for it, and send up to heaven for their charitable Sisters, the prayer so dear to God, the prayer of the grateful.

"You would also, by such little acts, help forward the maintenance of more penitents. You would also acquire experience in managing a house, and learn the rules of good housekeeping. I should like this system to be adopted in all our monasteries; not only would it lead to the best economic results, but it would be an advantage to health, for nothing fortifies the constitution so much as plenty of exercise.

"When you throw yourself earnestly into your work,

you are only fulfilling the law of God, who apportions that work. But when you try to help your Sisters, not only do you enter into the spirit of your Rule, but besides this, you are practising the evangelical counsels, for you are exercising perfect charity towards your neighbour.

“ If our Rule does not impose upon us much bodily mortification, we must work hard instead. You must do all you can to support the house of God. Oh, think of the difference between the work we do and that done continually in the world by the mass of the working-class, by most of the poor ! Great ladies, too, who are really Christian, work very hard, some to clothe the poor, some to decorate churches.

“ When you devote yourselves to the common good of the Congregation, you extend your zeal to distant lands ; when you contribute to the support of the house you live in, you acquire the merit of all the good done outside by the Community. A cook who does her work well, a Sister-baker who takes proper care of her flour and makes good bread, a Sister-gardener who works intelligently and devotedly, is indeed a treasure. A piece of land well tilled is an immense resource. Zeal and activity are the safeguards, the props of a house.

“ Nothing, to those who love God, seems hard to do for His glory ; and I ask you, do you not do more for His glory by working to maintain a few more penitents, than you would by staying all day, even under the pretext of becoming more perfect, in your cell or

in the choir, thinking of nothing but yourselves? It may truly be said that complete devotedness to God and the Congregation is a true happiness. Happy that Superior who finds this spirit of devotedness, in the religious of her Community.

“Work, properly speaking, is not prayer; but it may take the place of prayer when done solely with the intention of procuring the glory of God. In the spirit, therefore, of our Institute, work holds a chief place, and should, with due regard to circumstances, be preferred to a long retreat. Were you Carmelites or Trappistines, or the like, it would be a different matter. But you are religious of our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd. St. Paul, St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Francis Xavier, St. Vincent of Paul, did not lead the same life as the anchorites St. Antony, St. Hilarion, St. Arsenius. But all these rose to the highest degree of sanctity by walking in the paths to which they were called.

“Work, then, generously and without pause, according to the spirit of your vocation. Help one another reciprocally; this charity will draw on your labours the blessings of Heaven, and I assure you, you will have the sweet consolation of beholding the work of God flourish under your eyes, wherein you all co-operate with religious charity.”

CHAPTER XXIII

FOUNDATIONS AND WORKS

1856-1857

Santiago — Mother Pelletier's address — Her reception of her daughters — Mme. de Lignac — Suben in Austria — Journal from Mission Sisters — Modena — Love of religious ceremonies — The holy places — Election — Devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

THE Archbishop of Santiago, a prelate who combined the science of a learned theologian with the zeal of a saint, soon after he had introduced the Good Shepherd into Chili and founded San Felipe, secured a second foundation for his diocese. He persuaded the ladies of a benevolent society to ask for one in the town of Santiago, and they exerted themselves to such purpose, that Admiral Blanco Encalada, the Chilian Plenipotentiary in Paris, received instructions from his Government to open negotiations with Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia and to offer her generous conditions.

She sent one of her assistants to Paris to see the minister and confer with him, and he undertook for his Government, not only to pay for the outfit and voyage, but to allow the Sisters to take with them a chaplain from the *Missions Etrangères*.

When the Sister-assistant returned to Angers,

bearing these tidings, Mother General immediately gathered the Community round her, to give out the names of the Sisters appointed to the mission. Never was she more eloquent than under such circumstances. Her own imagination was excited, her own emotions stirred by the generous sacrifice of her daughters, by their departure, perhaps never to return; her very face became radiant with a singular beauty, and the words that fell from her lips would have touched the most indifferent. Upon the Community the effect produced was one of enthusiastic fervour. Every one felt what she felt, every heart beat with her heart. There was not one religious who did not wish that she had been chosen.

All who have known Mother Pelletier have admired the eloquence wherewith God endowed her. It is said that to realise her influence over her daughters, one must have been present at those solemn gatherings, where she poured forth the emotions of her fervent soul, fired with apostolic zeal. One should have heard her the day whereon she selected the missionaries for Chili!

“Our Divine Master, my dear Sisters, passed His whole life in humiliation, in grief, in obedience to the Will of His Heavenly Father. The saints have followed this example. Every saint has realised that great works are brought forth only at the foot of the Cross and in sufferings.

“How often during our recent retreat we have heard this repeated. But it must further be engraven

on our hearts. Our conduct, our feelings should be in unison therewith.

“I like to think of this Community as a Cœnaculum in the recollection, zeal, and virtue which should prevail here. When, filled with the Holy Ghost, the Apostles left the supper-room, they scattered themselves over the universe to spread the truths of the Gospel, and full of strength and courage went forth to face danger, to devote themselves, to lay down their lives.

“When holy obedience sent forth the first missionaries from the Society of Jesus there were only ten fathers. And to-day, my daughters, some of you are to have the like happiness and to devote yourselves for God’s glory and the salvation of souls. Yours is a beautiful mission; you leave us to become foundresses in Santiago, the capital city of Chili.

“Those, my dear daughters, are truly moments of consolation when one of you, coming to me, says, ‘Dear Mother, what would you like me to do? Am I to go or stay? I am ready for anything. I have no wish, no repugnance; I desire nothing but holy obedience.’ And this consolation is often ours. God speaks to the heart of Superiors. We often discover that one or another of you has some work to do for a certain number of years, or months perhaps: that she is, perhaps, called to some other place. . . . The tree will yield its fruit in due season.

“Go with confidence to this mission, which seems now so full of brilliant promise. The harvest of souls

will be abundant. The poor penitents are holding out their arms to you; they have no one else to save them."

When her words ceased, every heart was on fire with holy zeal. She might, had she so pleased, have sent every religious in the Community to the four corners of the world, and not one would have raised her voice to protest. There was not one among them who did not look upon religious obedience from the supernatural standpoint. It was God who commanded; how was it possible not to obey joyfully?

The departure of the Chilian missionaries, with Mother Moreau as Superior, took place on Sunday, November 2nd. Our Lady's altar in the Community-room had been decorated with lights and flowers for the parting ceremony, and, led to it by the servant of God, the Sisters, kneeling before it, read and signed their act of fidelity to the Rule and Constitutions, after which the whole Community sang the psalm *Laudate Dominum omnes gentes* (Ps. cxvi.).

Vespers were then sung in the chapel, and, after benediction of the Most Holy Sacrament, the Sisters, accompanied by the whole Community, went to the enclosure door. Here the Mother once more held her daughters in her arms, then it closed, and as it shut them out, the tears standing in her eyes, this cry escaped her, "How far, how far it is, my children!"

It was the 5th November when the Sisters left French soil. Just as they were on the point of embarking, Mother Moreau wrote these words to the

revered Foundress: "No matter what wind may fill my sails, you shall always be my Ignatius, and the Mother House my compass."

While these Sisters were leaving the Mother House, Provincials and Prioresses were constantly coming to visit their Superior, seek her counsel, give an account of their respective missions; but above all, to rekindle their own fervour by contact with the fervent soul of her who was to them both rule and model. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia enjoyed such visits with an ever-renewed zest. She called them "her *dessert*, her rest." "The pleasure I feel," she said, "makes me feel ten years younger." And for months beforehand she used to begin preparing for her visitors, looking forward to seeing them and to hearing from their own lips the progress made in their works.

In April 1856 the English Provincial and her Assistant, Sister Mary of St. Ignatius Weld, visited the Mother House, the latter for the first time. These visitors were welcomed with an affection which they warmly returned. They both received and gave much edification. A touching account of this visit is given in the Hammersmith circular. The English Sisters found Mother-General in the company of other visitors, the Provincial from Munich, the Prioresses of Poitiers and Aix-la-Chapelle, and Mother-General's maternal kindness for all greatly touched them. They were edified by all they saw: the Rule of their Institute, in all its purity, observed with the fervour of the Novitiate, and the cordiality and cheerfulness Mother

St. Euphrasia shed around her. The English Sisters were present at a clothing, saw St. Nicolas and Nazareth under Mother-General's guidance ; and when they returned to England it was with hearts refreshed by the unction of their Sisters' piety and fortified by their Superior for new labours.

In August the Provincial of Algeria, Mother de Stransky, arrived to give an account of her work to the servant of God, having previously visited the houses of her province. She brought with her an edifying budget of news, the story of conversions and apostolic work. But beyond all, it was her spirit of obedience, the mainspring of her life, her support in all the trials of her mission, which Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia most admired.

The next visitor to the Good Shepherd was Mme. de Lignac, the teacher of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's childhood. This venerable religious, Superior of the Ursulines at Tours, was accompanied by two of her daughters. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia received her with the warmest affection and with every mark of respect. She took her to see all the classes in each of the three houses—the Good Shepherd, St. Nicolas, Nazareth—and admitted her to every exercise of the Community. Her visit, which for Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia was a true festival of the heart, lasted only two days. She gave the Community, as a memorial of her visit, a picture of the Holy Face, which was placed in the choir of the religious ; later on she sent a companion picture of our Lady of the Seven Dolours.

In 1856 the Emperor Francis Joseph applied for another foundation for young criminals in Austria. He offered the old convent of Suben for the purpose, and Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia immediately acceded to his wishes and sent five religious.

The vast convent, which had been in former days occupied by Augustinian friars, had had no religious living in it since 1787. The building dated from the Middle Ages, and was situated midway between lofty mountains and smiling fertile valleys. Here, as at Sens and St. Nicolas, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's daughters began their task by clearing away rubbish and establishing order. The cells and cloisters were soon cleaned out, and then the first ten young female prisoners were confided to the Sisters' care, whose zeal and devotion converted their period of detention into a season of grace. These poor children's hearts were soon won and softened, and numerous conversions followed.

The Superior wrote to Mother-General that she was never so happy as when from 6 to 7 P.M. she gave catechism to her dear children; they were so docile that for them, also, it was the happiest hour of the day.

Suben, before long, began to recover its former aspect: the portraits of bygone abbots were put back into their places in the Community-rooms; the cloisters again echoed to the hymns and chants of the Church; and, peopled by 200 souls, the old monastery was once more filled with life and animation.

All the closing months of 1856 Mother Mary of

St. Euphrasia's prayers followed her daughters who were travelling to Chili. The voyage, over the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, lasted for several months, the Sisters solacing themselves in their forced inaction by talking to one another of their beloved Mother's kindness and goodness, and by keeping a diary for her which some time later she read aloud to the Community.

"On board the *Costa Rica*, feast of the Immaculate Conception.—We are, or at least we hope so, half-way upon our voyage, and, as a rest from our fatigues, we meet by the way a refreshing oasis, the feast of the Immaculate Conception. See, too, how all prepare to solemnise the feast. Hardly have the sailors finished washing the ship's deck, which dries quickly under the rays of the bright sun, than an altar is erected and decorated with delightful alacrity. Then the Captain himself appears on the scene: 'Lieutenant, have all the blue and white flags brought out. The ship is to be decorated to-day.' And as if by magic, the altar stands in the midst of a tastefully arranged sanctuary draped with our Lady's colours. Then comes: 'Hoist the big flag;' and the national colours float on the mizenmast. 'Ladies,' said the Captain, addressing us, 'if the Emperor were passing I should not have a finer flag to hoist, but for our Blessed Lady I should like to have one twenty times more splendid!' But all is ready by this time, and the lieutenant rings the bell at the stern; some one else the bell at the bow, and then the entire *Costa Rica* parish begins to move: sailors in their grandest

uniforms, passengers in their best clothes, all come to Mass.

"The Captain himself marshalled in the six little boys who are on board. They were dressed in white, and sat in a place of honour on a bench, near the altar. We had the happiness of going to Holy Communion at this Mass celebrated between sky and ocean. After the Holy Sacrifice, each of the children received a little commemorative medal as a reminder of the feast of the Immaculate Conception on board the *Costa Rica*.

"Our chaplain gave a short address, so fervent that no doubt it aroused memories of early piety in more hearts than one. We saw big tears on some of the men's faces where we had not remarked any signs of much feeling before.

"It was settled that the altar and temporary chapel were to remain decorated all day. Our Lady's statue was placed on the altar, where a throne for it had been prepared adorned with ribbons, lace, and trinkets, which the lady passengers vied with one another in bringing. The day was kept as a holiday by all on board, the Captain forbidding all work.

"At the breakfast-hour guns were fired. At two o'clock Vespers were sung as solemnly as could be managed. Our chaplain officiated; the passengers formed one choir, we the other. The whole of the crew were invited to hear the sermon, and all listened with religious attention.

"The preacher spoke admirably of our Lady.

“At night-fall, the deck was illuminated with oil-lamps in coloured glasses. Evening prayers were said at the foot of the altar, followed by the Litanies and the *Magnificat*, which were sung, everybody joining with genuine enthusiasm. Two little illuminated boats were launched into the sea, and it was very pretty to watch them borne from wave to wave, now rising, now sinking, in the sombre night. Starting together from the same point, as fellow-voyagers and faithful one to the other, they float away on the same wave, sometimes for an instant disappearing, then reappearing, and so on until at last they vanish from sight for ever on the limits of the horizon.”

While these good Sisters were making their way to Chili other Sisters were travelling to Italy. One day when the Austrian Archduke Maximilian d’Este, the special patron of the house at Neudorf, was visiting it, the female prisoners confined there fell on their knees before him, and thanked him for having brought the Good Shepherd to them, and procured for them the peace and happiness of living there. Struck with astonishment by all he saw, the pious Archduke suggested to his nephew, the Duke of Modena, to ask for a foundation of the same work in the Duchy. The request, made through Cardinal Patrizi, and approved by him, was forwarded to Mother-General, and the more readily complied with as she was touched by this revelation of the reputation her daughters had gained in Austria.

Mother Mary of St. Peter de Coudenhove (after-

wards by the Providence of God to succeed her as Superior-General of the Order), one of her specially beloved daughters, was the religious whom she chose to be foundress of the new house, and with her sent four sisters. Mother-General herself traced out their itinerary for them. They were to visit Lyons, Arles, Marseilles, and Genoa, and in the two first of these towns to visit the Good Shepherd houses, take them news from Angers, and encouraging messages from their Mother. The Sisters' destination in Modena was the house of detention at Buonporto, and on arriving there they found things in a sad state. Their first letter gives an account of the distress of the poor prisoners, and so moved Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia that she said to her Community, "Had we only more subjects, I would petition Pius IX. to let us take charge of all the gaols for female prisoners in Italy."

Her zeal was still further stimulated by a letter she received from the Bishop of Modena:—

"REVEREND MOTHER-GENERAL,—In all my life I have had few days of so much consolation as that on which the holy religious you have sent entered my diocese. Every day I thank the Lord for it.

"I am aware of all the good they do for the most abandoned class of women, and their arrival relieves me before God, from the heavy burden of these souls in such urgent need of help, and who hitherto have had no fixed and suitable establishment in this diocese."

The Bishop took upon himself the office of Superior of the house. The Duchess of Modena knew the De Coudenhove family, and took a lively interest in the house directed by Mother Mary of St. Peter. The Austrian Archduke, who originally suggested its foundation to Francis V., Duke of Modena, happened to be paying a visit to his nephew just when the Sisters' arrival took place; he not only went to see them in their new house but did everything he possibly could to help them. Indeed the whole of the reigning family, struck by the transformation of the house of detention, by the order and piety introduced and by the wonderful conversions, ever vied with each other in generosity. Duke Francis sent all kinds of presents, and helped Mother Mary of St. Peter to carry out her idea of planting the enclosure with vines and mulberry trees; the Duchess enriched the chapel, and the Duke's sister, the Countess de Chambord, and Princess Beatrice, the Infanta of Spain, sent money for the sacred vessels, vestments and linen for the sacristy.

In later years, when the Piedmontese Government withdrew the prisoners from the Sisters, the Bishop lent them a house at St. Jacopo near the town, where they settled with their penitents and Preservation children.

In 1857 Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia had the happiness of re-establishing the Good Shepherd at Genoa. The first foundation had been annihilated by the Revolution of 1848, and the house turned into

barracks. Mother-General's charitable heart suffered in the thought that Genoa, a town so populous, so ripe for the harvest, should be deprived of an asylum for its penitents. It was not without some difficulty, however, that she succeeded in restoring the foundation. Her daughters were obliged to change their quarters many times before they found a final resting-place at San Francisco in Albaro, in the outskirts of the city.

Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia rejoiced with her daughters, suffered with them in all the consolations, toils, and sacrifices of which they rendered her an account in their letters. On March 3rd, 1857, good news came of the mission at Bangalore, and that evening, at recreation, she expressed her joy in the following words: "I do not wonder at St. Ignatius' joy when he received St. Francis Xavier's first letter. My joy, too, is full, and beyond all words. It costs me more than I can tell not to give you all the news at once. How much I have suffered in not being able to do so."

A tradition to which she strongly held, was that of celebrating all the Community feasts with the utmost possible solemnity, and of bringing home their joy to all her classes by some favour, some mitigation of the ordinary routine.

On St. Euphrasia's feast there were always these special rejoicings for all her religious and for the children of the divers classes, and to this tradition Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's daughters always

faithfully clung in their far-off missions. They liked to begin their foundations on this feast, or any new works they undertook, to put them under the protection of their excellent Foundress' Patron Saint. In 1857 the feast was celebrated at Angers with unusual solemnity. A profession took place, after which M. Joubert, accompanied by a large body of clergy, and followed by the religious in procession, passed through the Community gardens to St. Nicolas, to bless a large laundry which Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia had lately had made in the cellars of St. Nicolas. Its construction had given her great delight in the prospect of henceforward seeing those employed in laundry-work sheltered from the inclemency of the weather. She therefore invested the function with all the pomp of a great festival. After it was over the procession passed into the Abbey Chapel.

She was always eager to procure for her convents all the spiritual favours possible.

Conforming in all points to the true spirit of Christianity, whenever the Liturgy afforded her an opening, she sent for the priest to give his blessing. She had confidence in the blessings contained in the Ritual, which express in words so pregnant in meaning, and so moving, the motherly care of Holy Church for all the temporal interests of her children. She had a great devotion to holy water, as a sacramental to the use of which our Lord attaches a special grace, and used it as authorised by the Church in her house and gardens, as well as in all processions. She never

forgot that the Church bestows a special character on the objects she blesses, withdrawing them from the category of things profane, and raising them to the dignity of things sacred, and, in a special manner, set apart to procure God's glory and the spiritual profit of Christians. She meditated on the Church's ritual with a profound sense of its meaning, and with great devotion towards our mother the Church, who follows her children everywhere to do them service, to draw down upon them, and the least of their works, the grace of God.

In 1859 it was proposed to her to found the Good Shepherd in Palestine, an idea she must have hailed with delight. She commissioned Mother Mary of the Immaculate Conception Mortier, the Superior at Cairo, to visit Jerusalem to see if the proposal could be carried into effect, who travelled from Alexandria to Jaffa with an assistant, under the care of Baron de Tronchay, who showed the religious the kindest attention on the voyage.

Jaffa, the ancient Joppa, where St. Peter had his prophetic vision, and Tabitha, the charitable widow, dwelt, was the first stage of what was a real pilgrimage for Mother Mortier. All her life Holy Scripture had been her peculiar attraction, and as she gradually approached Jerusalem the great Biblical facts were recalled to her memory by the vast plain of Saron, where Samson destroyed the crops of the Philistines with his foxes. The traveller's first halt was at Ramleh, the ancient Arimathæa, with its convent and church

built on the site of Joseph's house, the mountain gorges of Judæa, and the valley of the Terebinth, where David slew Goliath ; last of all, Jerusalem itself, the Holy City, the joy of Israel, and, in later times, of the Crusaders, the city at the sight of whose walls Jews from the provinces, and chivalrous knights from Europe, raised the voice of song—the city set by the Providence of God among the Judean mountains.

Mother Mortier made pilgrimages to every sanctuary and place hallowed by the presence of our Divine Saviour, carrying everywhere with her the living memory of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, of whom she deemed herself the delegate.

“It is impossible to express what the heart feels when one visits these places,” she wrote. “But of one thing, dearest Mother, I can assure you. At Calvary, at the Holy Sepulchre, at the Stone of Unction, at Gethsemane, everywhere you were present : in your name, and for you, I had the great happiness of visiting these holy places. The Institute so dear to your heart, and which has and still does cost you so much pain, I recommended to the suffering Heart of Jesus. With what joy we prayed for all our dear Sisters, and for the Novitiate !”

She visited the Patriarch, the Franciscan Fathers of the Holy Land, and the Communities of St. Joseph and of Sion. She was convinced, however, that, with regard to the Good Shepherd, nothing could be done immediately. She went back to the Mother House to give an account of her mission, and such was the

delight of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia in these recitals, that she made her repeat the accounts of her pious pilgrimage in every one of the classes.

Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's attention had been drawn to Mother Mortier's abilities by her wise government of the convent in Cairo, which she had ruled since 1850; and on June 8th, in the year she visited the Holy Land (1857), she assembled her Council and appointed her Provincial of France. The appointment was announced in a circular sent to all houses of the Order.

Having learnt that the Holy Father was about to make a tour through the Pontifical States, and would visit two Good Shepherd convents, Mother-General had a pair of beautiful slippers, ornamented with a cross, made for him at Angers: they were sent to the house at Bologna, to be in readiness to offer to His Holiness. She wrote, moreover, to Mother de Coudenhove at Modena, ordering her to go to Imola to present the homage of the Good Shepherd to him, with the religious there. The Pope seemed deeply moved on entering the convent at Imola, the house which twelve years before he had founded; the chapel, the whole management of the establishment, and particularly the piety and order prevailing everywhere, struck him. As he passed through the Penitents' refectory, he tasted the bread served to them. He allowed the whole Community to kiss his foot. He was, altogether, two hours at the convent, and, when he left, congratulated the Sisters: "Yes,

my daughters," he said, "I see God works marvels for you; I am delighted with everything."

His visit to Bologna was equally interesting. He would not omit visiting the convent, although in a town of such importance he had much other business to attend to. Those about him often noticed his affection for Good Shepherd convents, attributing it to that love for souls which marks the Order. At Bologna, the slippers, embroidered in gold and silver mixed with precious stones, were presented to His Holiness. A minute account of the whole visit, given in a local newspaper, is preserved in the archives at Angers, where it was placed by Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia.

Her term of office as Superior-General of the Order expired August 1, 1857, and for six days the religious of the convent, the Provincials from Italy, Germany, Piedmont, Africa, and America, and the local Superiors, met at Angers for the election, were edified in seeing their Foundress take her place among them in the quality of an ordinary Sister, and seeming to take genuine pleasure in being unnoticed. She often cast her eyes towards a picture of the Blessed Virgin which she had had placed near the seat she occupied at recreation, the Heavenly Mother to whom she committed her Community, and, as she saw her daughters come from such widely distant parts of the globe, gathered round her, she repeated these words with a joyful heart, "Thy children as young olive branches round about thy table."

The election took place on August 6th, the Bishop of Angers presiding, after he had said Mass in the convent chapel. He also addressed the General Chapter. There were present fifty-one electors; those not present sent their votes in sealed envelopes. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia was again elected, the Bishop confirming her election. She was led into the middle of the choir by her first Assistant, there made her profession of faith, took the keys of the convent from the Bishop's hands, then hastened to lay them at the feet of the Blessed Virgin.

The convent bells rang out joyously, the Community flocked into the choir and sang with enthusiasm the *Te Deum* and *Ave Maris Stella*, the professed and novices meantime approaching Mother-General in turn and reverently kissing her hand.

These ceremonies concluded, the assembly in the Community-room took place. The seat of the Superior had been surrounded by pillars, surmounted by an angel holding the standards of the different provinces, and above all the rest floated the banner of Angers, on which shone the key belonging to the town arms, to denote that Mother Foundress by her zeal had opened all the countries of earth to her daughters. In the name of the whole Institute, the Provincial of France offered her homage.

Never had Mother Foundress seemed so loving, so tender; and throughout the Order an unanimous outburst of joy, gratitude, affection, and zeal, welcomed the news that the apostolate was to continue

under the maternal government of the servant of God.

The day after the election she held a Chapter, and appointed religious to offices, or confirmed them in those they held, prefacing it, according to her habit, by an address. The subject she chose was the union of souls in prayer and communion, her own ardent love of God inspiring her and giving to her words such penetrating force that her zeal fired her hearers.

The tone of her voice, the power of her glance, but, most of all, the intense piety of every word she spoke, took such hold of all, that all were ready to follow her wishes. At a sign from her there was not one there who would not gladly have gone to the ends of the world, to proclaim the good news of the Gospel.

She was too practical ever to forget details, and made use of the present opportunity to suggest certain points of discipline in the interests of the Order. Availing herself of the presence of the Superior of the Roman convent, she sent some petitions to the Cardinal Protector, and certain regulations also for his approval. She announced to the Community that henceforward they would celebrate the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on the Friday after the Octave of Corpus Christi, the day fixed by the Church: the feast of the Most Pure Heart of Mary they were, however, to continue to celebrate on the 8th February, as the Church had not ordered this feast to be generally observed.

The rules and constitutions for the Magdalens (a section of the Community specially dear to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, their foundation having from the first been her idea) she gave to the Provincial, carefully reminding each, however, that she should submit them to the approval of her ecclesiastical Superiors. Confident that devotion to the Most Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary would be, in the world, the source of manifold graces of conversion, she besought the Mothers to propagate it as much as they could. Hence did altars of the Sacred Heart become very numerous in the Institute before the adoption of this devotion in the universal liturgy of the Church.

Her devotion to our Lady was displayed on every occasion. In order to place the convent at Trêves under the special protection of the Mother of God, she notified that the foundation there was to date from the feast of the Assumption, 1857.

At the departure of the Provincials and Superiors who had met for the election, her motherly heart devised various ways by which she might give to each some special token of her affection. Her own warm interest in the welfare of souls made her always glad to tell her daughters of any new foundations asked for, and of the good work they were called upon to do in the world. In the following address, given October 3rd, 1857, she speaks of the foundation of the New York Monastery :—

“I cannot put off telling you, my daughters, of the foundation of a new Fold of the Good Shepherd.

The mere thought of the many souls to be saved plunges me into an ecstasy of joy.

"At last we are to be established in a certain very densely peopled city. Can you guess which? Yes, dear children, it is New York. That town, where hell makes so many, many victims that they may be counted by the thousand, where there is such depravity of morals that it surpasses all bounds, there, the Divine Master, the Supreme Shepherd, is about to open an asylum of salvation for poor souls who wish to return from their wanderings. The work was proposed to us some time ago, and enough money to begin was provided for us. You know, my dear daughters, how much we desired to see a house of the Good Shepherd at Jerusalem, how we tried different methods to accomplish this, but were unsuccessful. Providence decided otherwise, and has now in New York, the Babylon of the New World, sent us compensation for our disappointment.

"The good to be done there is beyond all calculation. Every Protestant sect has its adherents there, and, as to immorality, it is carried to such a pitch that it has been found necessary to transport the most depraved young women to an island. Children begin to lead this terrible kind of life at the age of seven and eight. Well, my dear daughters, you may gather from all this how necessary a sheepfold of the Good Shepherd is for New York."

The tones of her voice, vibrating with her own religious enthusiasm, sent her words home to her

daughters, filling them with ardent zeal for the conversion of souls. People outside her convent admired her for her grace of manner in their reception, for her courage in undertaking work, but of her most striking characteristic the world had no knowledge, that of the unlimited power her words had over her daughters, whenever she represented to them that souls were waiting for them to go forth and lead them back to Jesus Christ. At such times she saw vividly before her imagination two pictures: one of sinners rushing blindly to their ruin, the other of souls, laden with sin indeed, but gently brought home to the fold of the Good Shepherd by her daughters' zeal. The zeal of an apostle striving to continue the work of the Redeemer on earth was kindled in her, the two pictures set her heart on fire, and lent to her speech, naturally fluent and picturesque, the most vivid colours. She spoke spontaneously as the words came without notes or studied preparation, and with the most unexpected, the most various effects, carrying her audience away with her, and through these pious impulses led them to the love of souls.

As her voice ceased, now as so often before, every one of her daughters, set on fire by her words, was ready to leave all, to go out to save souls.

CHAPTER XXIV

LABOURS AND FOUNDATIONS

1857-1858

The new church—Favours of St. Joseph—Trèves—New York—Reggio—Charlottenburg near Berlin—Waterford—Decease of M. Joubert—Mother Pelletier in her monastery—Jubilee—Difficulties—Liverpool.

THE year of grace 1857 was, for the house at Angers, a time of important works. In her zeal for God's house, His servant grieved to have but a chapel built hurriedly and inartistically in the early days of the foundation.

On the other hand, the chapel enshrined many precious remembrances: it had been built by the munificence of M. de Neuville, who had given the altar. The Mother was also reluctant to pull down the walls that had echoed to the prayers of her first children. She discovered, however, a means of satisfying her zeal, with due regard for pious memories. She commissioned M. Duvêtre, the architect, to trace a plan to include as much of the former structure as feasible. She had the altar moved to St. Nicolas'. "When they move the altar," said she, "I will keep out of the way; I should be too distressed at the thought

that it was M. de Neuville's gift. Gratitude puts me to the torture. It is out of respect for the good Father that we have chosen rather to forego the Gothic style, than pull down the walls, as should else have been done."

While the new church was being built, the temporary altar was frequently moved, first in the choir, then in the Community-room. These changes suggested to the Mother-General fresh motives for more fervent devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. "Dear children," would she say, "we are like the sun-flower which ever turns towards the sun." When the altar was set up in the Community-room, she rejoiced in the thought of the Divine Master's presence hallowing the place where she so often spoke to her children of their sublime mission. God was ever so present to her that it cost her no effort to behold Him in every action of her life. She undertook nothing without prayer. If she foresaw any danger, to avert it she prayed and made others pray. While the workmen were finishing the roof of the church, she kept three of the Sisters praying before the Blessed Sacrament, and made the Community of Nazareth address supplications to the Child Jesus. No accident happened. Thus did everything serve to call forth the zeal of the servant of God.

While the building was going on she frequently visited the works to encourage the builders by her kindness and charity. She was continually impressing upon the contractor that he must spare no pains to

make the house of God less unworthy of His Divine Majesty. Convinced that the new church was a necessity, she was wont to say to her daughters, that unless the Pope himself told her the contrary, she could not think otherwise. "But," continued she, "were the Pope to tell me that I am wrong, I would forthwith believe him."

The new chapel was fit for Divine Service by November. Ere this, the Mother, with the sanction of ecclesiastical Superiors, had often taken the Community into the outer church to show them the beauty of the structure. The severe Romanesque style of the nave adorned with carvings, and, later on, decorated with paintings, harmonised with the double altar that was placed between the religious and the lay congregation. The very windows, admitting but a subdued and mysterious light, were, as M. Joubert observed, in keeping with the sacrifices the Sisters were to offer within the hallowed walls.

The new chapel was blessed on November 13th. To invest the function with all possible solemnity, the Mother appointed this day also for the clothing of twenty postulants.

But the venerated Foundress wished to enhance the beauties of the house of prayer, and the Romanesque style admitting of much richness of colouring was just what she wanted. One day, when she was ailing, M. Joubert asked a Sister what would give pleasure to the Mother-Superior. "Allow her to decorate the church," was the reply. This was

granted, and in her gladness the servant of God notified the permission to her Community as follows: "My daughters, I deem it too great a happiness for you to be again chosen by the All-holy Virgin to adorn the dwelling-place of her Divine Son. It is her pleasure that each of you should give twenty francs during 1858."

To defray the building expenses, the Mother had already appealed to the several sections of her Community, and to each individual member. She had beheld all setting to work, undertaking extra tasks, sitting up late over needle-work, in order to devote their earnings to rebuilding the house of God. The divers classes had vied with each other in pious rivalry. The Sisters, too, had contributed the mite each had earned by personal toil, so that the servant of God said of her church, that it was "the jewel of the congregation, purchased by the work of all its members." That zeal, which had enkindled every heart, and set every finger in active motion for the building, became as lively as ever when the bare walls called for decoration. All were now intent on earning enough to pay for the frescoes.

On the morrow of this appeal, the Community, met in the Community-room, beheld at the foot of the altar, between two lighted tapers, a register headed by the inscription, "BETHLEHEM;" beneath was a picture of the Infant Jesus, lying upon straw, under which was written, "*Venite adoremus*" ("Oh come, let us worship"). The remainder of the page contained

the following prayer, a composition of Mother St. Euphrasia :—

“Most Holy Virgin, our Divine Mother, powerful Protector of our Institute, with devoted and loving obedience we subscribe for the decoration of the temple of thine adorable Son, our loving Saviour, veiled from sight in the holy Tabernacle. Mary, do thou bless us ; bless thy family of the Good Shepherd, that seeks but to forward the glory of the Divine Majesty. Obtain for all who enter their name in this book plentiful graces in this life, and a place in the heavenly Jerusalem.”

The register was soon filled. Under the name of M. Joubert, the servant of God had written with her own hand, “Mary of St. Euphrasia, handmaiden of the Blessed Virgin—sixty francs.” For weeks together the Sisters strove in friendly rivalry, that each might help to defray the expenses of decoration. Every leisure moment was taken up with voluntary work, in order to earn the wherewithal for painting the church.

Count de Galembert, whose mother was a great friend of the servant of God, paid a visit to the Good Shepherd, and greatly admired the new chapel. Being an artist, he offered his services for the frescoes. For the decorative painting he called in the aid of M. Guyot, whose taste was known and appreciated by the best families in Angers. The subjects were taken from the Divine Scriptures, those being selected which corresponded to the mission of the Community, such

as our Lord at the well of Jacob asking the Samaritan woman for a draught of water, and the Good Shepherd bearing the stray sheep on His shoulders. The altar was decorated in the same style, and with no less good taste.

With a view to the gratification of her daughters, the servant of God allowed them to hear the midnight Mass in the outer chapel, which had been thus decorated by their zealous labours. On Holy Innocents' she granted the same favour to the novices.

In 1857, she, with her Community, kept the feast of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, as in former years, on October 20th. The feast and the date were endeared to the daughters of Père Eudes. But it was for the last time. The Good Shepherd has since transferred the Feast to the Friday next after the Octave of Corpus Christi, to which it has been assigned for the Universal Church. Despite her attachment to traditional usages, especially those that could be traced to Père Eudes, Mother St. Euphrasia submitted without complaint to the behests of Rome.

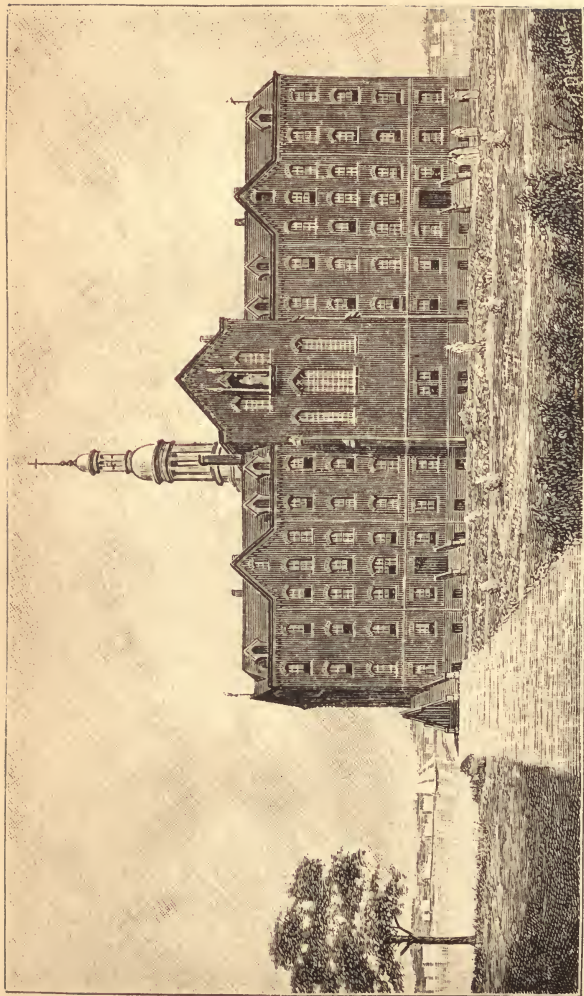
The autumn of this year was signalised in the Community by a special favour, due to the protection of St. Joseph, a favour which gladdened the hearts of all the religious. Mother St. Euphrasia was hard pressed by a debt that had fallen due. Her recourse was to St. Joseph, the head of the Holy Family. She had Masses said in his honour, and prescribed to her Community a novena of prayer.

The next morning she was called to the *grille* by

an aged woman she had never seen before, who brought her 800 francs, forbidding her at the same time to ask who had sent them. "Your willing acceptance of this gift," said she, "will oblige the donor no less than you would oblige a man dying of hunger were you to give him food. I was in such a hurry to bring you this amount that I have walked six leagues. I wanted to delay my journey ; had I done so, I should have failed in my duty to God."

Mother St. Euphrasia, quite taken aback, observed that the amount of the gift corresponded to the number of persons in her Community. The mysterious messenger went her way, saying, "Pray, pray." From that day to this no one has ever discovered who she was, or who sent her. To testify her gratitude, Mother St. Euphrasia, for the next nine days, led her Community in procession to the oratory of St. Joseph.

This same year she made many new foundations abroad. The first was in the United States, that of Cincinnati, humble indeed in its beginnings, but which, ten years later, became the headquarters of its Province. Mother Mary St. Ignatius Ward came from Louisville, at the request of Bishop Purcell, to begin this foundation, which was due to the liberality of Mrs. Sarah Peter, an Episcopalian convert, who later on was baptized at Rome by Mgr. Mermillod. Rev. Father Hangehold's zeal was of great assistance to Mother Ward. He it was who collected the money for her church. He was also the chaplain of her community. When Mother Ward came to Angers



Dubut, à Angers.

Phot. J. Royer, Nancy.

BON PASTEUR A NEW-YORK.

for the elections of 1857, she related to Mother St. Euphrasia the miracles of charity wrought by her daughters, or which had come to their knowledge, in the city so recently opened to their zeal.

It was just after these elections that Mother-General sent some of her religious to Trêves, to found a house of the Institute. A young lady of that city, left an orphan, with ample means, had joined the Novitiate of the Good Shepherd at Munich. She was desirous of conferring on her native town the benefits of a house of refuge. She was allowed to purchase a former monastery of Carmelites in the suburbs. The zeal of a director of the Theological Seminary Herr Mayer by name, enlarged the premises by the addition of a neighbouring house and gardens. Here religious of the Good Shepherd, under the rule of Mother Mary of the Child Jesus, were first established. The Bishop of Trêves, Mgr. Arnoldi, took great interest in the infant community. Herr Mayer came every morning from the Seminary to say Mass for the Sisters.

In America the good wrought by the Congregation had, ere this, occasioned repeated demands for new foundations. In 1857 the Superior of Philadelphia was summoned to New York to take charge of a convent, and to install the Sisters in their new abode. This greatest city of the United States, to which the prospect of making a fortune attracted emigrants of every race and tongue, presented to Catholics the sorrowful spectacle of deep moral debasement. Wealth

and luxurious living sowed corruption broadcast, and numbers fell victims. A few Catholic ladies had formed an association for visiting the prisons, and converting Catholic prisoners. But their endeavours, though now and then successful, were, for the most part, unavailing; the penitents needed houses of refuge. This pious association therefore petitioned Dr. Hughes, the Archbishop of New York, to take steps for the establishment of some such institution. His Grace represented to these ladies the difficulty, not to say impossibility, of reclaiming women. They, however, persisted, and related to him the wonders wrought by the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, at Philadelphia and elsewhere. He was at last convinced. His Vicar-General wrote to Mother St. Euphrasia; his letter was accompanied by another from a lady patroness, who described to the servant of God the pressing need for the Good Shepherd in the great American city. The authorisation from Angers was meantime taken for granted, on account of the well-known charity of Mother St. Euphrasia, and her zeal for the salvation of souls, and the Superior of Philadelphia, with the Sisters, took possession of the house that had been bought for them. On October 2nd, M. Storrs, the Vicar-General, said the first Mass in the new monastery. Mrs. Ripley mentioned to the servant of God the developments that might surely be anticipated for the house, situated in the midst of a population of divers races, gathered together at New York for worldly business. The event has fully

justified her predictions. The house is now the headquarters of a Province, and since its foundation, professions may be counted by hundreds, the young women, for whom it has been a refuge and home, by thousands.

In America foundations were made by associations of charitable persons. In Italy the first steps were taken mostly by the Chief Pastors of the Church, or by the nobility. In July 1857, the Superior of Imola forwarded to the Mother-General a request from the Prince-Bishop of Reggio, Mgr. Raffaelli, begging that a convent of the Good Shepherd might be established in his episcopal city. It was granted forthwith, and the servant of God urged the Superior of Imola to make the foundation before the close of the year. Like their Sisters at Modena, the religious of Reggio enjoyed the help and protection of the reigning ducal house, famed throughout Europe for devotedness to Catholic interests. Noble ladies, such as Countess Agatha Calcagni, the Most Illustrious Signorina Spalletti, Vittoria Besenzi, bequeathed funds for the maintenance of penitents in these refuges of the Good Shepherd.

On December 31st of this year, the Superior of Santiago sent to Mother-General an account of her mission, and her congratulation, in the name of her Community. It seemed as if absence and distance always redoubled the affection of the children for their Mother. The Sisters at Santiago had set up her portrait amid wreaths of roses, when they had heard of her re-election. Their deeds too bore witness that they had caught her spirit

of obedience and piety in all its perfection. Thus, when told that Rome had suppressed the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on October 20th, although they were grieved and said, "It was our dear Father who assigned that day;" yet forthwith they added, "Rome has spoken, that is enough." Not having been aware that Mother-General had been allowed to keep the feast once more on the old day, they discontinued the office on the very eve of the Octave, so soon as they received notice of the change. Mother-General in such things recognised in her daughters her own spirit of implicit obedience to Holy Church.

Protestant countries were no less desirous to have establishments of the Good Shepherd than those that had remained Catholic. The Order meets the needs of large towns, where destitution, as well as luxury, are fertile sources of immorality. The Prince-Bishop of Breslau, Mgr. Fösser, asked Mother-General to allow a colony of her daughters to settle at Charlottenburg, near Berlin. The dwelling was humble, on account of the paucity of his means, but he trusted that by degrees the tree would grow even as the grain of mustard-seed sown upon the earth.

A detachment from Munich, sent to Charlottenburg, was welcomed with great solemnity by the clergy. Leaves and flowers were strewn on their path, and the Sisters were taken to the church in procession. When imparting these particulars to her Community, on February 14th, 1858, the Mother-General could not restrain her joy. "Dear children, the heart of the

Blessed Virgin has founded this house at Berlin, a city all but wholly Protestant, where the Bishop does not even reside. The ministers have opposed it, but in spite of all, our Sisters have bravely entered upon their missionary labours." The King, however, was favourable, and had licensed this foundation for the benefit of young penitents. His enlightened mind, rising above the narrow-minded bigotry of certain Protestants, was able to appreciate the good work done by the religious of the Good Shepherd, through their unflinching devotedness to the most abandoned of their sex.

On the 23rd of the following March, the Mother led to the foot of the Blessed Virgin's altar, another colony of her daughters, sent by obedience to a very different quarter. They were to go to Ireland, the Catholic land *par excellence*, to that good but impoverished race whose lively faith has triumphed over persecution and dire penury, and in whom the spirit of St. Patrick still abides. In thus sending her children to the land of St. Columba, she was but paying, on behalf of France at least, the debt of gratitude for the examples of holiness Irish monks had, in days of yore, given to the continent of Europe.

The Rev. John Crotty, a priest of Waterford, directed a house of penitent women ; but, to impart life and stability to his undertaking, he made an offer of it to Mother St. Euphrasia. His diocesan, Dr. O'Brien, had sanctioned this application.

On March 23rd five religious started for this mission

from the Mother House at Angers. After a trying passage, they landed at Waterford, and were lodged, at first, in Barrack Street, in a small house, where the Rev. Timothy Donnelly, aided by the slender contributions of a poor woman, had started the refuge. This good priest had bequeathed his charitable undertaking to Father Crotty. Before the arrival of the Sisters, he had been obliged to get rid of the superintendents, and was sole governor of a house containing thirty-four penitents, who were maintained by laundry work. The young women had to fetch the linen, deliver it to their customers, and to purchase whatever was needed for the house, besides having the disposal of their earnings. It is easy to perceive that to bring them under the yoke of discipline was no slight difficulty. But, after all, these penitents had a deep sense of religion, and were industrious. It was here, too, that the first establishment for Magdalens, in Ireland, was opened.

In this same year, 1858, the Mother and her Community at Angers had to bear two very sorrowful bereavements. M. Levoyer, the chaplain of St. Nicolas, left to join the Community of the Blessed Sacrament, founded by Père Eymard. His zeal, exquisite tact, and earnest piety were highly appreciated by the young women committed to his care, and by Mother Pelletier.

A few months later, the Superior of the house, Canon Joubert, Vicar-General, was called to his account almost suddenly. On Sunday, August 22nd, he was

to have presided at a clothing and profession. While the Community waited for him, word was sent to the Mother that he was ill. On the following Tuesday his case was serious. The servant of God, taking alarm, ordered a novena of prayers for him in the Community; but on Friday, the eve of St. Augustine, his Patron Saint, M. Joubert breathed his last. The Mother sent some of the *tourière* Sisters to pray by the corpse, and to follow it to the grave. She deeply grieved the loss, and that, too, at a time when his advice was more than ever needed, of this wise and prudent Superior, who had ever proved a good counsellor. For the thirteen years this good priest had been Superior of the Good Shepherd his faithfulness and devotedness to the Institute had never changed; hence Mother St. Euphrasia resolved that the whole Order should take part in her mourning and prayers. In a circular, addressed to all her houses, to notify the sad event, she records the virtues and the services of their late devoted Superior, and orders in his behalf a solemn funeral service, thirty Masses, and three general Communions. She further commands a novena of prayer, in honour of the Ever-Blessed Virgin and of St. Joseph, to obtain a new Superior after God's heart.

The good Mother, who was continually adding to the convent buildings, laboured like the monks of old. The trowel and the mattock were ever in her hands, either for building or to clear and put in order the grounds of her enclosure. In 1858 she had new

dormitories built for her novices, the water of the Loire, and gas, laid on in every part of the house. Under her watchful eye the work advanced rapidly. To the workmen she ever spoke words of encouragement and kindly sympathy. The day the water of the Loire, brought from Ponts-de-Cé at Angers by waterworks, first flowed into the pipes at the Good Shepherd was kept as a holiday by all sections of the Community. The Mother went from one cistern to another as they filled, giving to each either the name of a Saint or a Scripture name. Thus one was called by the name of Mary, another by that of the Angel Guardian. She was wont to compare her garden, now furrowed by channels, to the earthly Paradise, watered by its four rivers. Her mind was ever fixed on pious memories, even when engaged with temporal affairs.

The Jubilee of 1858 began at the Good Shepherd in November. The Mother invited Father de Bellefroid, a man of God, wielding a marked influence over his hearers, to preach it. Her expectations were fully realised. She witnessed instances of exemplary penance among the Magdalens, and wondrous conversions among the penitents. One of these latter had hitherto turned a deaf ear to the exhortations of her mistresses and companions. But she could not hold out against the persuasive eloquence of Father de Bellefroid. Yielding all at once to grace, she returned to God, and proved the reality of her conversion by burning whatever recalled to mind her past life in the world, or fostered

attachment to creatures. In the course of this Jubilee, several penitents, to testify their renunciation of the world, cut off their hair, which in their early wandering from the path of virtue they had so highly prized. By the close of the Jubilee, Mother St. Euphrasia had obtained what she longed for—her children were purified and strengthened by grace. She had seen one hundred and thirty-three of the Magdalens, penitents, and Preservation class kneel at the Holy Table. As the Jesuit Fathers could not give two retreats before the end of the year, that of the religious had to wait till the January following. “We must imitate the pelican,” she said, “and think of feeding our children before taking our own food.”

For many a month did Mother Pelletier await in prayer the appointment of a new Superior; her Community too prayed for the same object. Forty postulants were waiting to be clothed, as, since M. Joubert's death, there had been neither clothing nor profession. The Mother was secretly pained by the fear that certain prejudices against her person and work lingered in high places, prejudices which might hamper the mission of the Order. This delay renewed in her sensitive heart the anguish she had suffered for years at seeing that, despite her endeavours, she failed to win the trust of her bishop. She deeply felt the insurmountable obstacle which barred her way in that direction. M. Joubert held, perhaps, the same views as the Bishop as to the rights of the Superior of a Community, but thanks to his compliant disposition, his extreme

kindness, his earnestness in the discharge of the duties committed to him, a good understanding between him and the Mother had been uninterrupted, and she had always sought his advice, and entertained for him feelings of respectful attachment. As we have shown, his death caused her the most lively sorrow, in which her community fully shared. The priest chosen at length to succeed him was the Abbé Le Boucher. This young clergyman, who had studied at St. Sulpice, had already acquired in the diocese a high reputation for his zeal, and predilection for dealing with young people. He had, to some extent, originated the work of Notre-Dame-des-Champs ("Our Lady of the Fields").

On November 10th, the Bishop of Angers came to install the new Superior, and made a very fatherly exhortation to the Community. M. Le Boucher assured the religious of the willing earnestness wherewith he meant to perform the duties of his new charge. "I will devote," said he, "my health, my entire strength, I may add my youth, such as it is, to the welfare of this house, to the admirable work of the Good Shepherd."

A week later he presided at the clothing of forty postulants. Rev. Father Richard, S.J., preached on Apoc. xxii. 2: "And in the midst of the street thereof, and on this side of the river, and on that was the tree of life, yielding twelve crops of fruits, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." The preacher applied this

text to the Good Shepherd, as the tree of life, the leaves whereof heal the nations.

This year of trial witnessed, ere it closed, the inauguration of the Roman liturgy in the house at Angers, to the unspeakable delight of Mother Pelletier. On the First Sunday in Advent, Mass and the Offices were chanted according to the Roman *Gradual* and *Vespéral*. By these changes Rome was kept more than ever present to the mind of the Mother, who took a kind of pious pride in the delicate attentions lavished on her Institute by Pius IX. She says, December 18th, in a circular addressed to all her houses, "The protection our Holy Father extends to our Institute fills us with the deepest gratitude. A short time since, he visited our monastery of *Santa Croce*, and what a visit! Can any kindness equal that of the Father of the Faithful? Our Sisters were allowed to stand about him, to speak to him with childlike freedom, and to kiss his hand. His Holiness was pleased to go over their several establishments; he addressed the penitents in words of such consolation and unction that they felt moved in their innermost soul. His very presence converted the prisoners, such is the kindness that beams forth from his venerated countenance. On his return to the Vatican he sent for the Community dinner two hundred little birds, as a token of his gratification at all he had seen."

Another account of this visit, which gave such joy to the heart of Mother Pelletier, has been penned by a biographer of Pius IX., the Abbé Sylvain.

“Arriving unexpectedly, Pius IX. went over every part of the establishment, tasted the bread of the Community, and left the boarders a present, which enabled them to keep holiday after his visit. He further ordered eighty bottles of wine to be sent to them.” Whenever Mother Pelletier wished to obtain a favour from Heaven, she made her daughters join their prayers to hers. For this end she enjoined temporary practices of piety. At the end of 1858, she had two important objects at heart. To obtain them she betook herself to the Divine Heart of Jesus, to Which she was most devout. In this she proved herself the worthy daughter of Père Eudes, who was the first to introduce the public worship of the Divine Heart, the source of every grace, of every signal mercy. On December 17th of this year, she made a vow for the purpose of paying special homage to the Sacred Heart every Friday of the year for the six ensuing years. Five Sisters, two professed, and three novices, were to make a day’s retreat, and to receive Holy Communion for the same intention. After the mid-day *Angelus* they were to say five times the “Our Father” and “Hail Mary,” then the Litanies of Loreto, and the Act of Reparation, as it is said in religious houses. By her own zeal, and by that of her children, Mother Pelletier was one of the most earnest propagators of devotion to the Sacred Heart.

The foundations of the Good Shepherd were now striking deep roots, and were able to supply cuttings for new plantations. The London convent was flour-

ishing. At the desire of Dr. Goss, Bishop of Liverpool, Mother Pelletier sent him, from London, four of her daughters, to found a house. The Redemptorists had lately been giving missions in Liverpool, and had for the first time publicly there kept the month of St. Joseph. To consolidate their good work, they called in the Sisters of the Good Shepherd to help sinful souls. Mother Pelletier saw this new monastery—one of her Benjamins, as Mother Hobbes, its first Superior, called it—grow as if by magic. The first house soon proved too small, as was the case with several others into which the Sisters, helped by the charity of generous benefactors, moved successively. The chief of these benefactors did not wish to be known, and, not till several years had passed, did the religious discover the name and quality of the lady for whom they were offering up their grateful prayers.

But what more than aught else encouraged Mother Pelletier was the spiritual good done by the ministry of her children. Mother Hobbes on one occasion related to her a most noteworthy conversion, the story of a penitent thirty years old, who when first she came to the convent was the terror of her companions, as she had always been to those about her. This woman, of portly size and of extraordinary strength, was hot-tempered, easily provoked, and very violent in her language. More than once, in a transport of anger, she had vented her rage on a girl who worked with her; but the peaceful surroundings of the convent softened her character; the kindness of

the Sisters had calmed her; God's grace had done the rest. "And," as Mother Hobbes wrote to Mother Pelletier, "this is an ample reward for all our trifling sacrifices."

Amid the bustle and noise of their surroundings, the Sisters were more and more convinced of the usefulness and benefits of their refuge. The population of Liverpool exceeds half a million; its trade extends to all parts of the globe; the busy crowds that pace its vast thoroughfares, that hurry to its large docks, extending for miles along the banks of the Mersey, leave to the charity of these religious numbers of women needing their care. The wretchedness and depravity of large towns made them the special objects of the zeal of Mother Pelletier and of her daughters. The Liverpool community was in close communication with the Mother House, on account of the many missionary Sisters who landed or embarked at that port.

"You cannot realise," say the religious of this house, "the pleasure we feel in giving a warm welcome to our dear Sisters when they are setting out for, or returning from, the missions. Five Mother Prioresses from America called here on their way to Angers. The narrative of the several difficulties they have had to encounter, and which they have bravely surmounted, has edified us no less than the happy issue of their labours has gladdened us. We only regret that they could not stay with us much longer."

Like the other daughters of Mother Pelletier, the Liverpool Sisters append to their circular letter a full account of their means of subsistence. They describe their gardens, the fruits and vegetables they grow at each season. Neither are the cows or the poultry forgotten; their number and qualities are set down. The horse of the establishment does not escape mention—that useful servant that takes to town the linen the penitents have washed, and brings home work for all the Community. Last of all, instead of signature, we read a catalogue of the religious, with the offices allotted to each, reminding us that, in the eyes of Faith, the most lowly occupations are no less important than the most exalted functions.

From the northern mists and fevered activity of Liverpool, the zeal of Mother Pelletier passed to the sunshine of the Levant, to the torpor of warmer climates, in search of souls needing conversion. For nine years her convent at Smyrna barely existed. The rooted distrust of the Musilmin, the jealous hate of the schismatic Greeks, hampered the labours of the Good Shepherd. To attempt a conversion was deemed a crime, and kindled the wrath of these irritable fanatics. The Community, therefore, having been offered, in 1858, a house in the British dependency of Malta, left this great city of Asia Minor, associated though it be with so many hallowed memories. The Sisters who landed at Malta on their way to Egypt had met a worthy Canon, M. Falzon, who desired the establish-

ment of a house of the Institute in his native island. The Superior of the house at Smyrna asked to be allowed to take her Community thither. Mother Pelletier, with the authorisation of Cardinal Patrizi, willingly consented. During a brief interval the Sisters lodged in the house of the French Consul, who, to make room for them, took his family into the country. They found a house to let at Casal, and at last fixed their abode in that neighbourhood, at Casal-Balzan. They found it extremely difficult to gather together a class. Their first penitent was brought to them from Alexandria by her mother. At length, however, the convent began to be gradually enlarged, until it afforded room for penitents, Preservation girls, and for boarders.

The last foundation made by Mother Pelletier in 1858, a year so full of the record of labours of every description, was in Styria, that fertile province of Austria, where the faith still flourishes. Certain pious persons at Gratz bought a house which the Jesuits had formerly built for a *sanatorium*, and dedicated to St. Anne, but which, during the Revolution of 1848, had passed into secular hands. They next besought Count von Athems, Bishop of Gratz, to apply to Mother St. Euphrasia for the establishment of a refuge. She forthwith sent some of her Sisters. Seldom had any foundation begun under more favourable circumstances. The dwelling, the enclosed grounds, the furniture had been provided by intelligent and devoted persons. The situation itself, amid mountains, the loftiest of which are snow-capped

during the greater part of the year ; the fair meadows, fertilised and decked with verdure by streams and brooklets, enhanced the beauties of this religious home. Their first penitents, however, being hitherto accustomed to freedom from control, supplied matter for the exercise of their patience, and of the other virtues of their holy state of life.

CHAPTER XXV

FOUNDATIONS—JOURNEY

1859

Consecration of the church—Cholet—Forlì—New Orleans—Chicago—Breslau—Mother de Coudenhove—The Roman Breviary—Dealings of Mother Pelletier with M. Le Boucher, the Superior—Pilgrimage to the grave of Père de Montfort—Devotion to the Stations of the Cross—Chanzeaux—Count Theodore de Quatrebarbes.

No sooner was the church finished than Mother-General wished to have it consecrated. Her fidelity to the monastic spirit made her wish to have her church outwardly plain and without ornament, but, like the king's daughter, "all glorious within." Her next desire was that the house of God, which echoed to His praises, should be hallowed by consecration. She had built this church at the cost of her own personal toil, and of the labour of her children. She would have it appear beautiful, not only to the eyes of men, but to those of angels, because hallowed with the anointings of Episcopal consecration. "Neither you nor I will ever go to Purgatory, dear children," was she wont to say, "for decorating our church, since we have done it to honour the Blessed Sacrament. This

is no breach of our vow of poverty. Nothing could have kept me from building this church. It seemed to me a mission I must needs fulfil, else I could not have died in peace.”

The church was consecrated on 17th May 1859, by the Bishop of Angers. The Mass of Dedication was celebrated by his Vicar-General, M. Bompois. The Superior, M. Le Boucher, preached. He showed that the work of Mother St. Euphrasia had for its aim the healing of souls; that some of the parish priests of Angers, grieved at beholding the havoc wrought by vice under their eyes, had been the first to entertain the project of founding this Community, the beneficent action whereof the zeal of the servant of God had spread to the ends of the civilised world. Mother-General had by no means spared herself in preparing for this solemn function. The day it took place she may be said to have surpassed herself by her judicious arrangement of every detail of the festival. The guests, whether clerical or lay, who, on this occasion, were allowed to enter the enclosure, and to go through the gardens on their way to St. Nicolas, were struck by the magnificence of the decorations, by the perfect order of the house, by the neat and pleasant appearance of all that met their eyes, and, above all, by the cheerfulness which shone forth in the several groups of girls, penitents, Magdalens, and religious living under the rule of Mother St. Euphrasia. One who had been present at this festival said of her that she was one of those saintly women God vouchsafes to

send but rarely, as if to teach us to value their wisdom and devotedness.

About this time Mlle. Chatin, a lady of Cholet, in Anjou, wishing to establish in her native place a *fold* of the Good Shepherd, had bought a house and handed it over to the servant of God. She accepted it the more readily, as many of the young ladies who had been admitted into her Novitiate came from the part of Anjou known as "military Vendée." She had learned to appreciate in them a generous devotedness and hearty zeal, which never flinched from any personal sacrifice. The Vendean blood ran in her own veins. Establishing a house of her Institute at Cholet would show to Catholic Vendée the devotedness of which the religious, their fellow-countrywomen, were capable. The beginnings of this new establishment were as poor as Nazareth, one might say. Mother Pelletier, who sent three of her religious to start the new foundation, had made them many presents from the stores of the Mother House, among which may be mentioned the plate for the service of the altar. She herself went to Cholet, 22nd June 1859, to superintend the new settlement, accompanied by two sisters and the Abbé Le Boucher. No sooner were the inhabitants of Chemillé, a small town on the road to Cholet, made aware of her coming, than they gathered in crowds to get a sight of her, and to testify their admiration of her works. They were in their Sunday clothes. The road over which she was to drive had been swept for a considerable length. When the good Mother got

down from her conveyance she was rather carried than allowed to walk, and babies were presented to her for her blessing. In a word, these good folks could not sufficiently testify their admiration and respect. On reaching Cholet, she found that two pious ladies, Mlle. Masson and Mlle. Couilbeau, had combined with Mlle. Famin for the support of the most recent and perhaps the smallest of her folds. On the morrow, M. Le Boucher said Mass for the first time in the humble oratory, which was but a room made to do duty for a chapel.

Having duly settled matters, the servant of God returned to Angers. Though founded in poverty, the convent at Cholet soon became a flourishing establishment. It had its share of the benefactions of the neighbouring Catholics to every religious house. It could not but feel the genial influence of the piety which prevails in military Vendée. Hence, in their first circular, the good Sisters thus express their gratification: "We are in one of the most beautiful spots of Anjou, with a boundless horizon, and scenery both delightful and varied. Our house is built in a field called Bois-Grolleau, which the massacres of 1793 have invested with a melancholy notoriety. Yes, indeed, dear Vendean Sisters, on this very spot, on the ground we can see from our windows, the brave defenders of our religion, your fathers, were butchered and shot down in thousands. Their pure and heroic blood, which watered our fields and gardens, calls down upon us the blessings of Heaven, while the

memory thereof encourages our devoted Sisters and our penitents, and inspires us with the wish to erect a memorial in honour of those who preferred death to apostasy and dishonour. Do you, then, dear Sisters, pray that we may get a favourable opportunity, so that your little Cholet may become a place of pilgrimage, and of holy and joyful memories." Their proximity to the Mother House enabled the good Sisters at Cholet to maintain closer and more frequent relations therewith than any other convent; they further endeavoured to imitate it in everything. "The Mother House regulates our festivals and devotions, as well as our manner of living. Thus we invoke Blessed Germaine for bread, St. Cajetan for the payment of debts. We beg of St. Philomena the love of God and good postulants; of St. Joseph, prudence and the interior spirit. We are ever asking Mother St. Euphrasia's advice and direction. Is not our angel Euphrasia close at hand! Her loving heart, so steadfast in hope, ever points out the way of duty and of heaven. This dear Mother is herself our guide in the rugged paths of our vocation. When we cannot enjoy her presence, her tender and affectionate letters restore our courage, and show us how to change the few drops of the bitter chalice into a torrent of delight."

The Community at Cholet knew how to value the visits of their Mother General. They describe as follows the deep impression made on themselves and on the Catholic people of Vendée by the presence of their venerated Foundress: "On June 23rd, our honoured

Mother General, accompanied by M. Le Boucher, our worthy Superior, came to put our work under the protection of the Sacred Heart. It was a holiday for the whole neighbourhood. The Mothers, dressed in their holiday clothes, leading their little children, some in red frocks, others in green, came with their Vendean faith to see our saintly Mother, and to get her blessing, which ever brings good fortune. Cholet could not have been more stirred up had the Empress herself passed through." The well-to-do made the offer of their splendid apartments, the poor of their humble service; but your relatives, dearest Sisters, surpassed all by their delicate attention. Our venerated Mother, however, preferred the Bethlehem of her children to the magnificent drawing-rooms offered by the most distinguished families of the place. Nor would we have bartered the happiness of that day for untold treasures. It was heaven upon earth to have with us our beloved Mother, at a time, too, when, at the prayer of our Rev. Superior, the God of heaven descended into our souls, to be our Treasure, our Strength, our Friend, and to dwell with us under our lowly roof."

The year 1859 began with new foundations. Two years before this, the Bishop of Forlì, in Italy, had obtained from Pius IX. leave to repair an old monastery, with a view to the establishment of a Community of the Good Shepherd. Mother St. Euphrasia could not refuse her aid to an undertaking patronised by Pius IX. So on January 29th, the feast of St. Francis de Sales,

she notified to her Community the foundation of a convent at Forlì. About two months later, the 19th of March, St. Joseph's Day, she had to tell her daughters of another foundation, that of the monastery of New Orleans, in America.

It was her wont to reserve her good news for a Saint's day. Her way of keeping it was to associate with the hallowed name a gladsome memory, and thus to inspire devotion to the Saint, and to draw down his protection on the new foundation.

On festivals she would have all her Community rejoice; and her chief joy was to spread the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Her lively faith in the Communion of Saints enabled her to realise the close union of the Church triumphant with the Church militant. In her mind and in her discourses she linked the joys of the former with the labours and conflicts of the latter. She offered to the Blessed Virgin and to the Saints, as it were, spiritual nosegays, in her own name and in that of her Community. Thus the foundation of the house at New Orleans was dated March 13th, the feast of her Patron Saint, St. Euphrasia. The first missionaries sent thither went from St. Louis. The new convent, which has since become the residence of a Provincial, grew rapidly. But a few days later another house of the Good Shepherd was opened at Chicago. The servant of God had often expressed the wish to see her Institute reach even the savage tribes of the new continent. Thirty years ago the aborigines had not yet been driven to the Rocky Mountains. Chicago

had not at that time attained its present growth and importance, and might be considered as an outpost of civilisation. Mother St. Euphrasia, therefore, willingly granted Bishop Duggan's request for some of her religious. She commissioned the Mother Superior of St. Louis to make the preliminary arrangements with the prelate, and to send the first band of missionaries. Dr. Duggan had bought a large piece of land, and had built a large convent. On their arrival the Sisters found everything ready. Five penitents who had been taken in by the Sisters of Mercy were awaiting them. The first Superior of this house, Mother Gakson, was a religious of great worth, who afterwards became Superior at Cleveland, in the State of Ohio. On the shore of Lake Michigan the children of Mother Pelletier set about the work of God with true American thoroughness. Twelve years later they had a large and flourishing establishment. But the fire which reduced so large a portion of Chicago to ashes did not spare their convent. Instead of wasting time in fruitless lamentation, the Sisters, in a letter to the Mother House, speak of their disaster in the following words: "The Good Shepherd at Chicago has vanished in an instant, just like a scrap of paper held to light a candle. It had lasted twelve years. On hearing of its destruction one might perhaps think that it was labour lost to take so much trouble to establish a house only to see it burnt down when just about to do real good. But do you, beloved Sisters, take comfort. Your Sisters who have been toiling at Chicago

are not disheartened. Their faith in a bright future is as steadfast as ever; the star of hope shines upon their ruins. The coming time will be but the brighter for the present darkness. These twelve years have not been wasted. More than a thousand girls have been admitted into our different classes. Holy baptism has been administered to forty-four slaves of Satan, who, had it not been for this refuge, would most likely never have been loosed from their bonds, or have had a claim to the inheritance of our Father in heaven. Numbers have made their first Communion, and have been confirmed. Not a few of our dear penitents have consecrated themselves to our Lady of Dolours, and have closed their days in this happy home of penance. Had but a single soul, by our toil and fatigue, been rescued from hell, we should deem it an immense favour to have been chosen (unworthy as we are) to be the instruments of that conversion."

These good religious give an account of one of the conversions, which had been a sufficient recompense of their zeal. The daughter of the Good Shepherd, by considering the tenor of her fourth vow, has learned the value of a soul redeemed by the Blood of God. In the light of this vow, the vicissitudes of life assume a new aspect; they are to be welcomed or dreaded so far only as they contribute to or hinder the salvation of sinners.

A poor child, Agnes by name, had been, much against her wish, brought by her mother to the Good Shepherd at Chicago. She longed to be free. Under

the influence of the Sisters she bound herself by vow for three years to our Lady of the Seven Dolours, and took the habit of the "consecrated," intending at the expiration of her term to return to the world. When the day came she asked for her secular dress, in order to leave. Her mother, fearing her weakness of character, refused her consent. Agnes insisted, and was about to lose the fruit of her long penance. The Mother Superior told the girl's mother that she had better let Agnes have her own way. The mother came, and very gently offered the girl the freedom she longed for, who after reflecting for a while, said, "Think no more of me, now that I have recovered my freedom my wish is to spend my days in this holy refuge, without ever casting so much as a glance on the outer world." Agnes went forthwith to the chapel, where, in presence of the Blessed Sacrament, she spent, with wondrous recollection, the intervals of leisure that were allowed her. What was the object of her prayer? Some days later she expressed her wish to make a general confession. "For," said she, "I shall soon die." From this confession till the end, her life was a continuous course of spiritual consolations. She was ever saying that she was soon to die. One morning the Sister infirmarian found her seriously ill, and the doctor pronounced the danger imminent. She received the last Sacraments. Two days later she asked what was the morrow's feast. It was our Lady of Mount Carmel (July 16th): "It is on that day I shall go to heaven! Help me to dress, that I may set out

directly." They had to raise her in her bed to dress her, and gave her her veil of "consecration," also her shoes, as she did not wish to go barefoot. In a word, she was equipped as for a long journey. The bystanders looked on in silent amazement. She was anxious not to be late for the feast. "What time is it?" inquired she. On hearing the reply, she said, "Then it is time to go." While the infirmarian gently supported her head on her pillow, she piously uttered the sacred names—Jesus, Mary, Joseph—then her soul burst its bonds to go and join in the never-ending festivals of the heavenly Jerusalem. "If we had saved but this one soul," said the Sisters, "it had been well worth while to found the mission of Chicago." But the children of Mother Pelletier, once settled in this great centre of industry, did much more than this. In their spiritual labours of conversion and of reformation they kept pace with the rapid progress of their commercial fellow-townsmen. They opened another house, to meet the needs of their mission. "Forward!" was their motto, borrowed from the Americans. A leading newspaper of the United States, during the late Universal Exhibition at Chicago, devoted a long article to the Good Shepherd convent. The contributor was not far wrong in thinking that his description of the Magdalens, and of the Preservation classes, would induce his readers to visit a house teeming with wondrous sights. He writes:—

"Chicago numbers several institutions for the reformation or protection of poor young women. Many of

these have been originated by that spirit of self-sacrifice which is the essential characteristic of the regular Orders of the Catholic Church. The house of the Good Shepherd is an illustrious instance of the most lofty ideal of charity. It is the refuge of sinners; as God's creatures, souls who have wandered from the path of virtue have a claim to admittance and permanent maintenance. On entering, they may read on the walls these words the Mother Foundress has addressed to her daughters: 'Love the penitents, but cherish with special affection the most sinful. Be charitable to them; apart from that, all else is un-availing.' The writer then goes into particulars which may interest his readers. But the work of the Good Shepherd is done in silence. A veil of oblivion is cast over the antecedents of each penitent. The publicist, therefore, can give but an outside glimpse of what goes on in the classes of the convent. None but the angels can describe the wonders wrought in the conversion of sinful souls.

In Germany the Good Shepherd flourished as in North America. The repute of its achievements and zeal procured for it many an invitation from bishops and their clergy. Mgr. Forster, Prince-Bishop of Breslau, in Silesia, wrote to the Mother-Superior at Munich for a house of her Order. She referred him to her Mother General, who gave leave for the foundation of a new sheepfold in this rich province of Germany, where the Catholics set their Protestant neighbours an example of practical faith, fruitful in good works. Canon Saner

said Mass for the first time in the convent at Breslau, on the feast of St. Elizabeth, after which the Blessed Sacrament was reserved there, our Lord thus taking possession, so to speak, of the new monastery. The servant of God, who for the last thirty years had trained missionaries animated with her spirit, had thus solved one of the most arduous problems of spiritual direction. She had attracted and gathered around her religious of every nationality—French, Irish, English, Germans, Italians—and, despite these diversities of country and race, she had united them in one Christian household, quickened by one and the self-same spirit, and dwelling together in peace and unity. Many other religious families, we are well aware, comprise members of different nations, but generally they remain in their native province, as if to guard against the clashing of divers national characters and prejudices. Replete with the true Gospel spirit, Mother St. Euphrasia considered her children but as apostles of Christ, apart from all diversity of country or of race. She ruled in the most perfect union over religious and novices of almost every tongue. Divine grace alone could work this miracle of Christian charity. With the rapid growth of the Institute, the office of government became more burdensome, and required more labour, more prudence, and practical knowledge. Mother Foundress wanted an Assistant animated with her own spirit and charity, whose lofty supernatural views would raise her above considerations of private interest, and even above those of the temporal advantages

of her Community; whose steadfast trust in God, whose work she was doing, would habituate her to suffer gainsayings, difficulties, persecution even, without inward disturbance, without any diminution of the peace of soul that comes from union with God. She would have her, even as herself, highly value the Rule of her Community, ever be the first at prayer, at work, at every public exercise, but the last to complain of external mishaps; towards others, just and fair dealing, but severe, nay, even harsh to herself. She, further, wished for one more cultured than she was, so as to be able to converse with the Sisters of divers countries in their native tongue. It would be this religious who, in all likelihood, would succeed her in the government of the Institute. Superiors-General next in succession to the Founder, when the death of the latter has somewhat cooled the first fervour, must needs combine, in no common degree, prudence, tact, and administrative ability, if they are to consolidate the yet youthful institution, and to keep it from deviating from its path. It is said with truth the successor of the Founder is himself a second Founder. After the work of planting, the superintendence of the early growth requires a firmness of government and extraordinary practical talents. Mother Pelletier had been gifted by God with a dignity of manner and bearing scarcely to be equalled. She was of opinion that an Assistant high born and well educated, descending from a family where generous sentiments and devoted loyalty to the

altar and throne were heirlooms, would derive from these advantages a *prestige* that would win for her the acceptance and loving obedience of the Community. Impelled by these motives the servant of God summoned the Prioress of Modena, Mother St. Peter de Coudenhove, to be her First Assistant. She reached Angers 30th July 1859, and on the morrow, the feast of St. Ignatius of Loyola, the anniversary of the foundation of the Good Shepherd, and the birthday of its venerated Foundress, she was appointed to her office. Till her death Mother St. Euphrasia shared her labours with the new Assistant, and trained her to govern. Providence had guided her choice, as Mother de Coudenhove was destined to succeed her, and to strengthen the Institute by further foundations in divers parts of the world. The servant of God, who was desirous of complying as exactly as might be, not only with the commands but with the wishes of Rome, had, at the close of 1859, the no slight gratification of distributing among her Community, the Roman Breviary. She had procured copies printed at Rome by the Propaganda press.

The circulars she sent on this occasion to her houses bore this heading: "Rome has spoken, the cause is finished." On others was inscribed: "They are our fathers and masters in the faith." The Breviary, which contains the universal prayer offered by the clergy and religious in the name of the Church, appeared to her most venerable and sacred, as being enjoined by the Pope, and recited throughout Christendom. To

join in the universal chorus of all the clergy and religious of the earth in singing in the same words the praises of God and of His Saints, was to her the ideal of common prayer, the prayer so recommended by our Lord.

We have shown that Mother Pelletier had deeply felt the loss of M. Joubert, who, while he was Superior, had never varied in his affectionate esteem for the Good Shepherd. In his successor she had met with the same devotedness, though joined to a more youthful earnestness. It cost her no effort to submit to the representatives of authority, hence she had made the new Superior her confidant. She took an interest in his health, and imparted to him her difficulties and the trials of her houses. On 27th April 1859 she wrote:—

“DEAR FATHER,—You are still ailing; it is, indeed, my heaviest cross: your health, your well-being are, in truth, the objects I am ever praying for. I owe you so much that I look about for means of proving to you my gratitude, but I worry you, good father. It is because without your advice I can neither perceive nor understand aught. Then, too, I have to ask you for much needed permissions, for counsel, to speak to you on business. Would you like us to send the carriage from Nazareth for you, and to dine afterwards in the parlour? I should be so much relieved! Here all is quiet. We have heard from our poor Sisters at Turin. They are calm in the midst of a raging storm, and are protected by both good and bad: God be praised!

Here is a letter which will surely give you pleasure. Adieu, good Father. Please write me but two short lines, and believe in the respectful submission of your daughter,

MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA."

The Mother was as submissive as a child to those set over her. In glancing over her letters to M. Le Boucher, we see that she derived both sweetness and strength from following the advice given her, even in the most minute details.

M. Le Boucher had been Superior for six months, when she wrote to him:—

"June 27th, 1859.

"MY GOOD AND TRUE FATHER,

"Do you remember what advice you gave me last Saturday? I have followed it to the very letter. Amid countless annoyances and occupations I ever find relief, dear Father, in obeying you, in lightening your burden. God only knows how deeply I esteem you. Should, then, your good Angel bring you here this evening at seven o'clock, it will be a reward for your most obedient and respectful child,

"MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA."

She was fond of conversing with M. Le Boucher about her distant foundations, and the internal management of her Community.

"Come on Saturday evening. I have much to submit to your judgment, wonderful foreign news to tell you, but I am too ignorant to set down here so much as the name of the country where our dear

American children are gone to open a new sheepfold of the Good Shepherd. But do come on Saturday : I shall have learned my lesson."

A few days later she writes :—

"Our Lord has compassionated my affliction in sending me a visitor who has greatly comforted me, and has restored my peace. That visitor was yourself, dear Father. The good you do to my soul and to my troubled heart is beyond expression, so too is my gratitude. The silence of Modena grieves us.

"We are sure that the telegram has been duly delivered. But now for another matter : with your approval the good Italian Father will kindly take one of our Sisters to Modena, to speak to the Bishop, and send on our Assistant here : what do you think of it ? It is, to my mind, most providential. You are fully aware of my reliance upon you, and of my affectionate obedience.

"MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA.

"Come often. I am still in great suffering, but you have restored peace to me. As they are going to apply ice to me, the counteraction will work my cure."

Though M. Le Boucher was not her confessor, her confidence in him was such that she disclosed to him her anxieties and perplexities of conscience.

"*July 28th, 1859.*

"DEAR REV. FATHER,—For some days past my conscience is ill at ease, and I can speak of it only to you.

Be so kind as to see me a minute or two before to-morrow morning, that I may be able to go to Communion.

“The Blessed Virgin will reward you.”

It was especially in times of trial that the Mother had recourse to the priestly knowledge of M. Le Boucher. In the Superior, in the priest she beheld the representative of our Lord, from whom he receives his mission, and, in virtue thereof, the graces needed to deal with troubles incidental to the service of souls.

“*Friday, August 5th, 1859.*”

“DEAR REV. FATHER,—I am overwhelmed with crosses, and cannot but long for your arrival. Could you but know what a day and night I have just spent. I own that next to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and of Mary I wish to draw near to your kindly heart, that I may disclose to it my anguish. Come, then; that is all I can say, except to assure you of my boundless reliance and respectful attachment.

“MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA.”

“You will find me, like Job, on his dung-heap, receiving every moment news of some fresh misfortune!”

Whenever M. Le Boucher was away from Angers, Mother Pelletier gave him all the news of her Community: her letters are full of charming details. She begs him most gracefully to hasten his return to his *sheepfolds*.

“OUR MONASTERY, *September 11th*, 1859.

“REV. DEAR FATHER,—You are far away in Paris! You can no longer see the steeple of your poor village of the Good Shepherd; you no longer hear the sound of its bell, of which you were so fond. But you are no longer teased by the importunate tongue which was so often calling, ‘Come, Father, come, I have so much to do!’ This poor mother greatly misses her kind father. She is looking for him everywhere. Tell us all about yourself, about your health, so dear to us, and of whatever interests you. You know my esteem for you.

“Say Mass for us at Nôtre Dame des Victoires. Go and call upon our good children at Conflans, but write first to your poor mendicant, I beg you.

“To return to our small items of village news. The day you left we were honoured by the visit of Mgr. Fruchard, Bishop-elect of Limoges. He was accompanied by M. Bompois, and by some other ecclesiastics. Apart from that, we have been very quiet. We journey on peacefully. The piety, the earnest self-denial and application to work shown by our Sisters are admirable. Our good Mother of the Holy Ghost is more suffering. It concerns me greatly! Pray for her! Our classes are going on well. Six days more and we shall meet again. I long for your return, and remain, &c.,
MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA.”

The good Mother reserved for the Superior of her house attentions far more delicate than those shown

to its most distinguished guests. She took a lively interest in his health, made him all the presents the Rule allowed, and took delight in preparing for him many an agreeable surprise. His relatives were received with the most hearty welcome.

She writes to him on September 11th:—

“REV. DEAR FATHER,—Our Bishop will be blessed and beloved of Heaven for having confirmed your mission, given faculties, and honoured you with his confidence. He has comforted you, my dear Father. Thank you for telling me. But you have much more to tell me. Next Thursday I must hear everything, or else I will say no more to you. We are expecting two young English girls to-night, who went to Paris. Particulars are wanting.

“We are having fine weather here; if it is otherwise elsewhere, so much the worse; it is no fault of ours. On Thursday you must bring your worthy relatives, and those two dear little lambs. We have no wonders to show them, but only devoted attachment. Everything shall be in readiness and in good order. There shall be no grass on the garden walks, and on Thursday morning they shall be swept, to clear away any leaves that may have fallen from the trees. The doors of every heart will be opened to you; mine as you know, always is. Read therein, Rev. Father, the respectful attachment wherewith I remain, &c.,

“SISTER MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA.

“I long to embrace your good Mother; I beg you tell her so. The little family dinner will be ready on Thursday at five o’clock. There will be no ceremony, as you are well aware that is not my way. Come in good time, all of you. There are so many ins and outs in this village of the Good Shepherd.”

In her written correspondence, as in her conversation, Mother Pelletier speaks her mind with the unreservedness of one who fully trusts in her correspondent. She pours out the overflowing fulness of her heart, passing from one topic to another, following the lead of what she then and there feels. We miss in her diction the studied reticence, the bewildering shifts of a mind that would mask its real meaning, and conceal its real intentions. The frankness of her mind, ever intent upon the good and the beautiful, shines forth in her style. She delights in doing a service to her Superiors, and to those who had deserved well of her Community, and this is apparent in every one of her letters.

Like all the natives of La Vendée, Mother Pelletier had been brought up in devotion to a great servant of God, Father Grignon de Montfort, who, in the seventeenth century, had evangelised La Vendée, Poitou, and Anjou with apostolic zeal. The name of this missionary was still a household word in these parts, and frequent pilgrimages are made to his grave at St. Laurent-sur-Sèvre. This apostle of the people, whom Rome has lately beatified, had much in common

with the servant of God; his devotedness to sinners, his power of enkindling zeal in others, his piety, which attracted crowds to him, may be instanced among other traits of similarity.

The proximity of her convent at Cholet to the town of St. Laurent-sur-Sèvre afforded the good Mother an opportunity of going in pilgrimage to the grave of the great wonder-worker of the Bocage. On April 23rd, 1860, she started for Cholet to inspect the building of her new establishment. The next morning a humble conveyance took her and her companions to St. Laurent-sur-Sèvre, a distance of two leagues. The fields on her route had in 1793 been the scene of bloody strife. The inhabitants of the country had fought like heroes against the Republican troops. These plains had witnessed many a thrilling tragedy, which would naturally occur to the mind of a traveller like the servant of God, bearing in her bosom a Catholic heart, with whose earliest memories were intertwined tales of the heroism of the Vendean warriors and pastors, carrying the mind back to the last century. Prompted by the sight of castles and mansions in ruins, or still bearing the traces of the Revolution, it depicts to itself some of the events which have occurred behind these bushes, in these dells, on these hillsides: at one spot a Mass in the open air, the bystanders are Vendean peasants under arms, who, with their wives, are praying for the end of this dreadful conflict; at another it is a priest harboured by some poor family, bearing the Blessed Sacrament on his person, to administer the

Viaticum to the sick ; elsewhere are groups of aged women and children, saying the Rosary amongst the bushes. There is hardly a farm in this little corner of La Vendée Angevine which has not been the theatre of some heroic self-sacrifice, or of some tragic scene in those dark and evil days of the “great war.”

While recalling these memories, Mother St. Euphrasia crossed the Vendean Bocage, and reached the Sèvre valley, in which St. Laurent is all but hidden by surrounding hills.

This small town, hitherto unknown and unnoticed in history, has, since Blessed Grignon de Montfort died there, become famous, and is much frequented by the pious population of western France. Not a day passes but some Christian family comes thither to beg some Divine favour through the intercession of the saintly missionary. At times a sick child is brought there, or the clothing of an invalid is laid upon the grave of the *Beatus*. The pilgrims, before presenting their petitions, go to confession and Communion, then, kneeling in family groups, they pray with one heart, mostly in the words of their usual daily prayer around the hearth of their village homes. On feast days, and on those of public pilgrimages, whole parishes, headed by their priests, come processionally, following their banner and their cross along the deep lanes of the Bocage. The litanies of Loreto, and hymns composed by the saintly missionary, are sung chorally, and, being taken up by thousands of voices, make the hillsides of the Sèvre repeat the sacred strains they re-echoed two

centuries ago. What is most impressive is the recollected and pious demeanour of these pilgrim crowds. Twenty, thirty thousand of them create no noise or tumult. As the long procession winds its way singing, it is as if angels accompanied the throng, such is its good order, such the calm and heavenly peace prevailing within it! On reaching St. Laurent, Mother Pelletier's first visit was to the church of the pilgrimage, to pour forth her prayers, to recommend her Institute to the *Beatus*, and to ask of him zeal to wage war against sin, and to spread the kingdom of God. The grave of Blessed de Montfort reminded her of that of St. Philibert, at Noirmoutier, which she was wont, when a child, to adorn with flowers, and at which she had so often prayed. But now, after thirty years of a religious life, devoted to the relief of human misery and to the sanctification of souls, she soared above the considerations of personal piety, and prayed for her children, bearing with them to all parts of the world the doctrine Blessed de Montfort had preached. She prayed for the conversion of all the penitents sheltered in the houses of her Institute. No other pilgrim, we may say, had ever visited this hallowed grave whose aspirations were in closer unison with those of the saintly missionary—aspirations originating in a ministry than which none could bear a greater similarity to his own. For forty years Blessed de Montfort spent himself in striving to win sinners to repentance. The life of Mother St. Euphrasia was, in like manner, one long conflict for the conversion of erring souls.

The grave of the saintly missionary is embowered as amid blooming and fragrant plants, and surrounded by three religious Institutes, which justly claim him as their founder—the Sisters of Wisdom, the Fathers of the Holy Ghost, and the Brethren of St. Gabriel. Mother Pelletier called upon the Sisters. Her daughters, in their missions, had been in frequent contact with these Sisters, and had invariably met with the greatest kindness at their hands. More than once, while their own convent was being prepared for them, they had been hospitably entertained by the Sisters of Wisdom. Mother General was welcomed with effusion by these religious, who showed her their large convent, and the admirable arrangements of their garden and land. She admired most of all the good order, the neatness and poverty which marked this convent. She then went to a large Calvary, erected in the open air, to go through the Stations of the Cross on her knees, according to the spirit of Blessed de Montfort. She was always ready to adopt the pious practices of Saints. The Stations erected by Blessed de Montfort are famous. Wherever he went, this great missionary established this devotion. The Calvaries of Pont-Château and of St. Laurent hold a prominent place in the record of his missions.

The Stations of the Cross was a favourite devotion of the servant of God. Besides the Indulgences granted to it by Holy Church, she saw in it a practice in conformity with the most genuine and most edifying Christian spirit. In former times the

great servants of God died content when they had seen Jerusalem, and had walked in prayer along the *Via Dolorosa*. Like St. Ignatius, Mother Pelletier had wished to establish a house of her Institute at Jerusalem, to honour, by following them more closely, the footsteps of our Saviour on the road to Calvary. She beheld in this devotion an act of tender piety which cannot but speak to the heart, and fire it with love of our Lord. To follow our suffering Saviour on one's knees from station to station, fixing the mind meanwhile on the scenes of His Passion, from Pilate's judgment-seat till His entombment—what a simple and natural method of impressing on the soul the heinousness of sin, the infinite loving-kindness of our Lord; how easily will it inflame the heart of the Christian with love for the God who died for his sake!

On her return to Angers the Mother stopped half-way at Chanzeaux ("The Vendean Parish in the time of the Terror"), the story whereof has been penned by Count Theodore de Quatrebarbes in so moving a style that his book is to be seen in the library of every good Vendean who cares to know and to cherish the purest glories of his little country. Mother Pelletier had received from Chanzeaux many religious filled with the real Vendean spirit. One of them, Sister Mary of St. Rose of Lima, full of activity and of zeal, was a member of her Council, and had special charge of the little negresses sent from Cairo to the Good Shepherd. The servant of God was, therefore, most

willing to visit a parish of which she had been told so much by some of her most cherished daughters. On the other hand, Count de Quatrebarbes and his wife had often besought the servant of God to honour them with a visit, but she had always declined with the most graceful tact. "When outside the enclosure I feel like a fish out of water," would she say to her children. But this time it was hardly possible to refuse the invitation. On her first journey to Cholet she had been obliged to spend two hours in a roadside inn, about half a league from Chanzeaux, to bait the horses. This came to Count de Quatrebarbes' ears. He called at the Good Shepherd, and after the preliminary civilities, he assumed a serious tone to rebuke her as follows: "You have done something which has much pained us. Is it possible that you, Mother General, an enclosed religious, went to an inn, and stopped there two hours, when in less than five minutes you might have reached your mansion at Chanzeaux, and your friends would have been so delighted to have you with them!" Mother St. Euphrasia had promised the Count to call the next time she visited Cholet; she kept her promise. The Count and his wife, worthy heirs of the virtue of M. de Neuville, their uncle, greatly admired the servant of God. The people of Chanzeaux had been apprised beforehand of her coming. They flocked to the mansion in their Sunday clothes to get a glimpse of her, and her blessing for themselves and for their children. Their noble hosts gave to the good Mother

and her daughters a princely reception. They left nothing undone to show the honour in which they held the venerated Foundress. They showed her all the relics of the Vendean Martyrs that are kept in the church, the Community, and the mansion of Chanzeaux.

Count T. de Quatrebarbes, "a knight of the thirteenth century who has strayed into our time," as he was described by a Prefect of Angers, writing in reply to a Minister of State, who had questioned him concerning this brave and loyal champion of the monarchy, had gathered around him every memorial of the heroic Vendean struggle that came within his reach. As a teller of stories he could not be surpassed. He described to Mother St. Euphrasia the prowess of those brave peasants who, without arms or trained officers, kept in check the Republican hosts. At one time it would be the village belfry, wherein ten men, led by the sacristan, Rogueneau, made a heroic stand, yielding but to the flames which had devoured some of the women and children who had taken refuge there; at another, a chalice, with a bullet-hole in the cup, which was held by a priest, M. Blanvillain, when he fell into the conflagration, after having absolved those who were around him; elsewhere, the ruins of a mill at Irôme, to which the villagers who clung to their religion were taken to be massacred. With an emotion shared by his listeners, the Count narrated to Mother Pelletier the heroism of the two Mlles. Picherit, who, for refusing to strip the

altar of the church of the flowers they had brought to adorn it, were taken to the mill and butchered by a Republican fanatic! Rather than take their flowers off the altar they went to meet the martyr's death singing hymns. The virginal delicacy of piety, which raises its standard of duty so far above human weakness that the world can hardly understand it! Under the wondrous pencil of the Count it was just as if a series of *tableaux vivants* had, after an interval of sixty years, been unveiled to the eyes of Mother Pelletier and her companions. Their noble host depicted to them another moving scene. In 1799 Abbé Soyer, since Bishop of Luçon, gathered into a dale far from the roads the children of Chanzeaux and of the adjacent parishes who were old enough to make their first Communion. Vendean soldiers stood as sentries on the neighbouring hills. At dawn of day M. Soyer, in the midst of a pious multitude that had hastened thither on all sides, said Mass at an altar under the shade of two large oaks, and in the hushed stillness of the fields, the more thrilling from fear of the enemy, he distributed the Bread of Angels to the children he had catechised in the woods and thickets. The Count had given a commission for paintings of these incidents worthy of the era of the Catacombs. But their pathos could hardly be surpassed when he narrated them to Christians so worthy of appreciating them as Mother St. Euphrasia. To the end of his life the Count remained the fast friend of the Good Shepherd, and a devoted

admirer of its Foundress. He was wont to go at times to the convent grille to get edification. He who in his sixtieth year left the comforts of home to hasten to the aid of Pius IX., assailed by the Italian revolution, and gave proof of heroic valour in the defence of Ancona against the Piedmontese troops, took pleasure in discerning in the servant of God that open-heartedness, that ardent devotedness, which stamped his own character.

CHAPTER XXVI

TRIALS—FOUNDATIONS

1860-1862

Piety of Mother Pelletier while travelling—Her love of hospitality—Supernatural trials—Foundations in Chili, in Holland, at Orleans, in Corsica, at La Serena—Devotion to St. Joseph—Viterbo—Cologne—Mother von Kleindorf.

IN 1860 Mother Pelletier was often called away from Angers by the necessities of other houses, but, however dear to her was the peace of the cloister, she quitted it without hesitation when the interests of the Order were concerned.

Thus, shortly after her return from Cholet, finding that the exigencies of a rising Community made her presence there necessary again, she went back, and, the Prioress of Munich happening to be at the Mother House for a few days' visit, accompanied her.

In June she was summoned to Poitiers by urgent business. On the way she stayed at Tours and saw Mme. de Lignac, the old and faithful friend of early days.

The affectionate regard of all who chanced to be thrown with Mother Pelletier when travelling was won by her unfailing thoughtfulness for others, her unvarying amiability.

On the journey from Angers to Tours she thus made the acquaintance of ladies, some from Paris, some from Nantes, who were anxious to learn from her all about the Good Shepherd—the object it sought to attain, the history of its wonderful development—and they were so captivated by her accounts that they seemed really distressed to part from her.

When not otherwise employed, the good Mother spent her time in prayer, and especially in saying her beads—she lingered over this devotion, as if prolonging it were a satisfaction to her piety. The religious who made the long journey from Tours to Poitiers with her, and who found edification in watching her at her devotions, noticed that she was sometimes occupied in saying her rosary for three-quarters of an hour.

At Poitiers she was received with every imaginable token of filial piety, and this affection received immediate reward. Mother Pelletier gave herself up completely to her daughters; she saw each in private, visited all the classes and offices, reported all news of interest from the Mother House and foundations, and, at meals, with her own hands, served out the little delicacies she had brought with her.

In a few days she left for Angers, stopping at Tours by the way, where she visited Mother Mary of the Incarnation, Prioress of the Carmelite convent, to whom she was bound by the ties of old and intimate friendship.

The two Mothers first conversed long together of their respective troubles; then the Prioress summoned

the Community to the parlour, and Mother Pelletier gave an account of the various Good Shepherd works to the Sisters who, much interested, congratulated her for having been called by God to work so directly for the conversion of souls.

They were particularly struck by her accounts of the foreign missions. Whilst these were being talked of Mother Prioress reminded Mother Pelletier that, as a girl of eighteen, she had written her a letter saying that once, when in prayer, she had felt drawn to ask the Carmelite religious to pray that she might some day work for the salvation of little savages.

Meanwhile, other of the good Sisters had been preparing refreshment for the visitor—a carp, which they fished out of their pond, and served in the parlour.

Before leaving Tours, Mother Pelletier went again to see Mme. de Lignac; she had promised to pay her a farewell visit.

Hospitality was always looked upon by Mother Pelletier as a Christian duty. She was hospitable to every one, but she took a special delight in exercising this virtue towards religious. In 1860 three Barnabite Fathers came to Angers to found a college, but met with such opposition that they gave it up; not, however, before they fell into grievous straits. Accounts of their poverty and difficulties reaching Mother Pelletier, she offered them a house near Nazareth, belonging to the Good Shepherd, and sent to it the necessary furniture. She also, with the permission of the ecclesiastical authorities, converted a room at the Nazareth

farm into an oratory for the Fathers. This she delighted in doing. To give our Lord a roof to dwell under, an altar where the adorable sacrifice of the Mass should be offered, was always a great joy to her. She wished that the two first Masses should be said for the intentions of the Good Shepherd Order, and sent the usual offering, which, however, the religious would not accept, but said their Rule bound them each to say a weekly Mass for their benefactors, and they would do so for her. One morning, very early, she and her assistants went to the oratory of the Fathers, out amid the Nazareth fields, and heard Mass there.

The Fathers were recalled by their Superior in the month of July 1861. In the meantime they had been appointed chaplains at the Champs des Martyrs, a place of pilgrimage at a few minutes' distance from their humble home.

Many of the letters these Fathers wrote to their Superior made mention of the delicate charity of the servant of God, who gave with a grace that made it seem as if she were receiving instead of conferring an obligation.

Every joy, every sorrow of the Church found an echo in the conversation of the servant of God and her daughters. The name of Pius IX. was constantly on her lips in 1860, and she often assembled the Community to tell them of the misfortunes of the Holy See, of the war against the Holy Father, and of all his sufferings. She would at such times ask her daughters to give their Communions, mortifications,

and a share of all the merits of their work, for the triumph of Holy Church. She sent three hundred francs as Peter's Pence in 1860.

We already know with what warm, lively emotion she always spoke to her daughters of the future of the Good Shepherd; and as the work grew, this joy also increased, in spite of her additional responsibility.

"My dear daughters," she said to them, on the 23rd March 1860, "my heart is flooded with delight; if our Lord did not Himself support me, I think I must die of joy. Listen to what the good Mother Superior has written to me from Cairo.

"'For a year, dear Mother, I have been trying to form a bouquet for your fête. I might have told you of it before, but I wanted to give it to you whole. This bouquet is made up of one hundred and thirty-three baptisms, between the 1st May 1859 and the 1st March of this year.'

"A hundred and thirty-three baptisms!" continued Mother Pelletier—"is it not enough to make one die of joy? And most of them little Muslim children, who died almost immediately after being baptized. Our Sisters gave many of them the name of Euphrasia. How many are now in heaven!"

But these delightful spiritual consolations were soon to be succeeded in the faithful soul of Mother Pelletier by conflict with the evil spirit and mental trials. In the history of every Saint we find these alternations. The devil, enraged against those who subvert his empire, especially those who, like the

Curé d'Ars, convert many sinners to God, makes such souls the objects of his most furious assaults. The whole work of Mother Pelletier being also one unending series of conversions, a perpetual mission preached every day in every land, the demon must therefore have hated her and her works, and have done all he could to discourage her.

She often told her daughters of these conflicts with the evil spirit, especially when she was on the point of founding some new monastery. On the 31st March 1860, she said, "It is long since we have had three foundations at once, as we now have. The demon is furious when he sees us going forth to snatch from him the souls he holds captive, and the full brunt of these storms from hell falls on me. Almost always when we are on the point of founding a house I spend terrible nights. In the midst of fever, which I may really call infernal, I see the dark side of everything to such a degree that were I to tell you my thoughts next day it would be enough to discourage the council. I say to myself, 'No, I will not make the foundation.' But in the morning I see everything in a different light, and take good care not to tell our Sisters what I have gone through. I spent last night in this way, and that because we are going to establish ourselves in Holland, and the foundation at Orleans is settled."

In these spiritual trials Mother Pelletier was supported by perceiving that God blessed her work in sending her plenty of novices. On the 29th of June Mgr. Fruchaud, Bishop of Limoges, presided at a pro-

fession of novices, and a month later (July 29th) the Bishop of Angers gave the holy habit to thirty-three postulants.

In order to obtain the continuance of such blessings as these, Mother Pelletier had recourse to multiplied public devotions in the name of the Community. To Puy she sent 200 francs, as a contribution towards the erection of the statue of our Lady of France; she also renewed, for six years, the vow to the Sacred Heart, with the same obligations as before, to obtain special graces for the Institute.

On St. Joseph's day, March 19th, 1860, Mother Pelletier announced the foundation of a third house in Chili.

The Spanish ancestors of the people of Chili took with them to their home in the New World their lively faith as well as their dauntless courage, and the religious of the Good Shepherd foundations there were formed on Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's favourite pattern. They were generous, full of spirit and energy, trustful in Divine Providence, ready to start at any moment in response to the call of God.

From San Felipe, the Mother-Assistant, Sister St. Teresa, and four other religious, went to Valparaiso to found a house, which they supported at first by their own work, while giving an example of the most austere religious poverty. Trials of this kind at the beginning of a foundation never alarmed the Foundress of the Order. Like the great apostles in every age of the Church, the servant of God never fixed her thought on

any part of the inhabited world without aspirations for its welfare. She was ever yearning for the spread of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Protestant countries had a special attraction for her zeal. It seemed to her that no apostolic work could be more pleasing in God's sight than that of restoring our erring brethren to the unity of the Catholic faith.

For some time it had thus been her desire to plant the Institute in Holland, a country from which several of her most promising novices had come. Something in the calm, serious, practical character of the Northern mind made her feel that the difficult mission of the Good Shepherd would succeed in the North, and she therefore readily responded to an application sent by some of the most eminent priests of Holland, and authorised by Mgr. van Vree, Bishop of Haarlem. A Carmelite Father was at the head of the movement, and at Leyderdorp, near Leyden, a house had been for some years in course of preparation for the purpose. Mme. van Jacobi, in religion Sister Mary of St. Teresa, widow of a Dutch general, who had entered the Order in 1853, was the Superior whom Mother Pelletier chose to begin the work.

The Community being assembled, she gave out the names of those appointed to the mission; then, addressing them, she said, "My dear daughters, you will start next Wednesday, the day before the eve of the feast of the Compassion; but in the books the foundation will be dated from Palm Sunday, because this work, which will begin with our Blessed Lady in

her sorrows, will also be a triumph, for you are setting out to undo the devil's work in a Protestant country."

On the 27th March she conducted Sister St. Teresa, the new Superior, to the altar of the Blessed Virgin, to receive her promise of obedience. On the following day the Dutch foundation was recommended to the prayers of the Community.

On the 1st May the house at Orleans was founded, with the cordial approval of Mgr. Dupanloup, who welcomed the children of Mother St. Euphrasia with great hopes for the sanctification of his episcopal city.

The following letter is one he wrote to the Prioress:—

"May 8th, 1860.

"DEAR REV. MOTHER,—Among the many cares of my ministry it is a great consolation to me to see your most excellent work established in my episcopal city. I am confident that the blessing of God, which has rested so manifestly on your work in so many other towns, will also be very abundant in our midst. You do well to rely upon the inexhaustible charity of the people of Orleans. It will never fail you, and I give my approval beforehand to all who shall bestow alms on a work so highly important for the salvation of souls and the well-being of society."

Mother Pelletier, always keenly alive to every mark of affection shown her daughters, was especially grateful when such tokens came from Bishops. Mgr.

Dupanloup's letter at once reminded her of the Blessed Virgin's protection of the Institute. "If we had been holding a chapter to-day," she said, "we should have begun with these words of Mary, 'My soul doth magnify the Lord.'"

A fortnight later she announced to her daughters that another foundation was to be made. "We all desire," she said, "to do honour to the Blessed Virgin, especially in this month, which is her perpetual feast. I think that what will please her most will be our foundation at New Ross."

At New Ross, a town in Ireland, two priests, the Rev. William Codd and the Rev. Father Crotty, had, with the generous help of Mr. Richard Devereux, undertaken to establish a house of refuge. They had applied to the Mother Prioress at Waterford, by whom all their letters were forwarded to Mother Foundress.

The formal authorisation of the Bishop of Wexford being obtained, she at once gave leave for the foundation, and looked upon it as a sure means of obtaining new postulants from the Blessed Virgin. "We have been fervently asking our Blessed Lady to send us postulants," she said, "and now I am sure they will come since the foundation is to be made."

For some time the servant of God had been telling her daughters of a very poor mission she was anxious to accept. She spoke of it with a kind of predilection, as if to remind each member of the Community of the love of holy poverty, that beautiful virtue of their

state. In the beginning of July she said to them, "This month, my dear daughters, forget it not, is to be one of great events. First of all, we must think of fervour. Next, as a matter of course, we must accept Bastia. It will never be as rich as Chili; but it is our desire to make the foundation, because there are souls there to save. That is what we care for."

Speaking again on the same subject, she said, "Religious who love poverty and simplicity very much will be required for Corsica; everything there will be poor."

The project for this foundation had been made by the Vicar-General of Bastia, the Abbé Rige. Mme. Giordani had lent him her generous aid.

First obtaining his Bishop's authorisation (Mgr. Casanelli), the Abbé set to work to make ready an abode for the Sisters, who, on arriving, found everything prepared and in order. They were solemnly received on landing, by the Bastia clergy, and were cordially welcomed by the two religious Orders already established in the island, the Jesuit Fathers and the Sisters of St. Joseph. Mme. Germana (whose husband was the chief judge of the local court), and M. Valéri, proprietor of the island mail packets, constituted themselves their benefactors, and Corsica shortly became to the Sisters another mother country.

As to their poverty, they thought of it only as a feature of resemblance between themselves and their Foundress when she first began her great work.

Poverty has never been absent at the beginning

of any house of the Good Shepherd, and this fact, although poverty is not only an evangelical virtue, but the one most dwelt upon by the Divine Teacher, has furnished matter for accusations of imprudence against Mother Pelletier; as if, in the early history of every religious Order, poverty had not always been the most striking feature.

In 1860 a little band of religious left the Roman convent of the Lauretana for Capua, to take charge there, at the request of the Archbishop, Mgr. Cosenza, of a house, dedicated to St. Margaret of Cortona, opened in 1852. This mission began, not only in extreme poverty, but in dire distress. The Sisters had barely taken possession of the house than the town was besieged by the Italian troops. All communication was cut off, and the poor Sisters were completely isolated from the other convents of their Order. They could neither send nor receive letters, therefore could neither make known their troubles, nor receive sympathy in them.

Day and night for two months they continually heard the noise of the siege, but, in spite of all their trials, they stood firm and stayed at Capua. Neither privation nor the horrors of war overcame their zeal.

Meanwhile Mother Foundress at Angers was preparing a group of religious for another work. Any separation from her daughters, especially one that promised to be permanent, drew out all the tenderness of her heart, and upon these Sisters, who were being

prepared for a very distant mission, she lavished her most delicate attentions.

The servant of God had long since begun to speak of a mission to La Serena, in Chili, as one full of spiritual promise. She had a prophetic foresight that labours and blessings were in store for her in Chili, and had prepared the Sisters so well for this and other missionary work that to make choice among them, when all were ready, was the only difficulty.

As soon as the Bishop of La Serena had sent funds for the voyage, Mother General made inquiries about ships sailing for South America, and finding that one was to leave Bordeaux for Rio de Janeiro at the end of December, she secured six berths.

On the 22nd December the missionary Sisters, under the guidance of Mother Mary of St. Ambrose Hennequin, left Angers; they celebrated the feast of Christmas at Bordeaux, received the blessing of the Archbishop, Cardinal Donnet, then embarked on board the *Guyana*, and began their long voyage. They reached La Serena April 29th, having spent two months on the Atlantic, and one in crossing the Cordilleras.

Mother Pelletier, having a peculiar gift of imparting her own zeal to others, the Institute was impregnated with every practice of devotion usual in the Church, and, of course, St. Joseph was far from being neglected. Many Communities look upon this Saint as having the care of their temporal interests, and ask him to be to them what he was to Jesus and Mary in the Holy

Household of Nazareth, of which they love to consider themselves but the continuation.

Anxious to stir up devotion to this great Saint in her daughters' hearts, and to show him her loving confidence, Mother Pelletier caused a statue of St. Joseph to be sculptured and placed in the convent. M. Bourriché, the promising young artist to whom the work was intrusted, has since contributed some very beautiful pieces of sculpture, inspired by Christian sentiment, to churches in Anjou.

While the statue was still in the sculptor's hands, a niche was being prepared for it at the Good Shepherd, underneath which Mother General placed letters from herself and her daughters, enclosed in glass vials. These letters were all prayers to St. Joseph for special graces. The report of this having reached foreign houses of the Good Shepherd, many letters from them arrived, with requests that their prayers might be enclosed with those of their Mother. A list of all the houses of the Good Shepherd was also buried in the foundations of the niche, and medals of St. Joseph, St. Philomena, St. Geneviève, and St. Germaine; a sou was also thrown in to show that St. Joseph was established as Procurator of the house, for the whole proceedings were symbolic.

They were announced by twelve strokes of the convent bell; and, ten days after these ceremonies, twelve more strokes announced that the Saint's statue was being brought into the convent. A week later it was lifted into its niche, all the bells of the Com-

munity being meanwhile rung in honour of the event. But even this was not enough to satisfy Mother General; it was her desire so to honour the Saint that her daughters should never forget the ceremonies of that day.

On the 22nd August, therefore, the Bishop of Angers, accompanied by a large body of clergy, came to bless the statue and shrine, the day being celebrated with rejoicings in the Community. As usual, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia received the guests of the convent with delightful grace, and she made the solemnity memorable for all the household. After Pontifical High Mass there was a procession, all the children of the various classes being arranged in the gardens at different points. In the evening the monument of the Saint was illuminated with Bengal fire. This illumination was the work of a kind family living near the convent.

The servant of God now called St. Joseph "*Superior-General*" of her Community, and announced the nomination to the houses of the Order and to other friends. Some of the letters she received in return were rather amusing. The following is from Father Ferrari, a Barnabite, and a great admirer both of Mother Pelletier and the Institute:—

"Do you know you really upset me? My heart beat violently when I read the extraordinary announcement that a Superior-General of the Good Shepherd had been elected. My curiosity and alarm increased at every line, and my eyes hurried on to the explana-

tion; and when I found out how stupid I had been I burst out laughing.

"For such a Superior I, too, will vote. The choice seems to me excellent. Henceforth St. Joseph is to shield the Good Shepherd with his protection, and woe to all who venture to lay a finger on it! But you must warn the novices that the new Superior-General will be somewhat severe. He has been accustomed to have no companions but Jesus and Mary; he loved disagreeable toil, prayer in affliction and obscurity, the hidden life, poverty, renunciation of self, and I think he will like to have children after his own pattern.

"I think, too, that the little Jesus was fond of making crosses, and then offered them to St. Joseph as beautiful presents; and St. Joseph himself, having now no workshop, will like to make you heirs of his furniture, among which you will find these very crosses; and you must take them.

"But, nevertheless, I am glad to learn that Mother General's crosses are somewhat less heavy. God be praised! Had I good stout shoulders, I should like to be her Simon of Cyrene. But of this grace I am not worthy. Yet do I envy the happiness of those souls who know how to relish silently all the sweetness of sorrow, and who come forth from the bitter waters of suffering fortified."

The devotion of the servant of God to St. Joseph, her confidence in him, knew no bounds, and was manifested in many ingenious ways. She ordered

that every day a portion should be placed before the statue of the Saint in the refectory; it was to be called St. Joseph's portion, and to be served either to the best child in St. Germaine's class, or the first beggar who came to the convent gate. To merit St. Joseph's portion became a great matter of emulation among the children of St. Germaine's class.

On more than one occasion, the foster-father of Nazareth gave evidence of his protection of the temporal interests of the Community. The servant of God being one day pressed for money to pay a creditor, felt a conviction during dinner that St. Joseph would pay for his portion. And indeed she had hardly left the Refectory, when she was sent for to the parlour, and there found the relatives of one of the religious, with just the sum required. They told her that something had made them feel that they must settle affairs for their family with the Good Shepherd.

On the 26th September Mother Pelletier's address to the Community began with these words:—

“Every day, my dear daughters, we shall receive some new grace; I am convinced of this. I do so love this life of abandonment to Providence! This simple faith pleases St. Joseph very much. Yesterday I was somewhat anxious about a temporal matter, but I repented immediately, and quickly made three acts of contrition. Do not you, my dear daughters, love this abandonment better than wealth?”

She was fond of telling the Community all the anecdotes she could collect of St. Joseph's particular

protection. She gathered these stories illustrating their holy patron's kindness, sometimes from the Jesuits, sometimes from the Trappists. On the 4th October she finished her address with these words:—

“We are under the government of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph, and under such guidance we must never make any false step.”

She had a particular devotion to reproduce, so far as possible, the very image of Nazareth in each of her houses. She everywhere multiplied statues and pictures of our Blessed Lady and her holy spouse, and everywhere accustomed those under her to work after the example and under the protection of the Holy Family.

In the midst of her many labours and trials, the servant of God, from time to time, met by the way angels of consolation, as it were, sent by God to give her courage by showing her the good done in the Institute. These angels were very often missionary Bishops, who were well able to appreciate the work of the Good Shepherd, because brought so close to it in situations requiring the utmost devotedness.

On the 24th August 1861, the Bishop of Cincinnati, Dr. Purcell, arrived at the Good Shepherd on his return from Rome to America. He was first shown over the house, and then gave an address to the Sisters assembled at the Grille, in the following encouraging tone:—

“Your vocation is an apostolic vocation; thank God every day of your lives for having called you to it.

Look at the great American cities—New Orleans, New York—how many souls are healed by your means. And Cincinnati! could you but see the peace, the serenity, the celestial happiness which shines on the penitents' faces; it almost seems as if rays of light came from their foreheads. Well, all this is the work of the Good Shepherd. And now it is Boston which opens its arms to you, as the Macedonians to St. Paul, and cries, 'Give us religious of the Good Shepherd!' Happy town of Angers which possesses the Mother House of the Good Shepherd. Blessed be the religious who founded it!

"Yes, my children, thank God every day of your life that He has chosen you to co-operate with Him in the work of the Redemption. Come, and thank Him in the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

"The Eucharist is the sun of our system of religion. There you will find the light, the graces necessary to correspond to your beautiful vocation."

Such allocutions as this of the Bishop of Cincinnati more than sufficed to console the servant of God for many tribulations, and gave her new courage for her work and for self-sacrifice. They assured her by the mouth of competent witnesses that her Institute was pursuing the path marked out for it by God, and that her missionary children were in accordance with the aspirations of her apostolic zeal.

From such addresses she came away herself more than ever a missionary, and, out of the fulness of her own overflowing spirit, poured zeal into the souls of

her daughters in such measure that whenever a new mission was proposed there were always more volunteers than places to fill.

Another of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's consolations was the appreciation of the work shown by different governments, by their recognition of her services, and their offers of support. In 1861 the Bavarian Government gave her daughters the use of a convent and enclosure at Wernberg, in the diocese of Ratisbonne. The idea of founding a house of the Good Shepherd there had originated with the pious Bishop of the diocese, and he had been heartily assisted in his design by Mr. Glöckl, a magistrate. This refuge, transferred five years later to Ettmanskirchen, had in the eyes of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia the peculiar advantage of being the good work of a State. Like the Saints, who always hold authority in due respect, she felt that governments do themselves honour when they do good, and that, by securing peace to the souls of the unfortunate, and furthering the devotedness of religion in its mission of salvation to the world, they acquire dignity in the sight of God and man.

But supreme among all encouragements were those that came from the Pope. Pius IX. had remained steadfast in his attachment to the Good Shepherd ever since the arrival at Imola of the Sisters to whom he had given shelter in his own palace, and had seen the work done by the Order in Rome itself. Correspondence between Rome and Angers was frequent, and

from time to time some token of the Holy Father's affection reached Mother General, who, on her part, lost no opportunity of testifying her filial devotion to His Holiness and her zeal for the Church.

In 1862 Mgr. Nardi, auditor of the Rota, a Roman prelate, visited the Good Shepherd, and was received with every honour by Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia and the Community.

He was very much struck by the work, saw all the classes, and when leaving said to Mother Foundress, "I do not tell you to do good, for I do not see how you could do more than you are doing."

As he offered to be the bearer of messages from the religious to the Holy Father, the servant of God and her Council gave him the following letter, which thoroughly expresses the habitual sentiments of the Order towards His Holiness:—

"MOST HOLY FATHER,—We, your daughters, religious of the Good Shepherd at Angers, have been greatly consoled by the visit Mgr. Nardi has deigned to pay us. It has given us great joy to hear your Holiness spoken of, and to be assured that our sentiments of deep gratitude and devotion will be laid at the feet of your Holiness by that prelate. With what fervent joy should we hear, most Holy Father, that Heaven, listening to our prayers, had at last put an end to the sorrows of your Holiness, and to those of Holy Church. Our revered Mother General, full of faith and of the deepest veneration for your sacred

person, would thankfully lay down her life to obtain this great grace, and we would gladly do the same."

Questioned by Mgr. Nardi as to what she most desired from the Holy Father, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia told him she wished for nothing so much as to obtain indulgences for those deceased religious who, after the toils of this life, were still, perhaps, detained in the sufferings of Purgatory. That the three chapels—those of the Good Shepherd, St. Nicolas, and Nazareth—might have each a privileged altar was therefore the favour for which she petitioned.

She had inexhaustible charity for the dead, especially for those belonging to her religious family, following with her affectionate zeal beyond the tomb the souls that had co-operated with her in her labours, and rendered her the homage of their obedience; souls she had promised to guide with her maternal care in the road of self-sacrifice, the road that leads to heaven. It was her greatest aspiration to gather together again in heaven the family of the Good Shepherd. Her devotion to her daughters already in the Church triumphant was also beautiful and touching. To them she prayed for those still lingering in the Church suffering.

In 1862 Mother Pelletier founded a monastery at Viterbo, in Italy, in a house beneath the shadow of the church dedicated to St. Rose of Viterbo. It was made at the request of the bishop, Cardinal Bedini. Mother Provincial of Rome was sent there to instal

the first Superior and her daughters. But the most important foundation of the year 1862 was that of Cologne, important because of its marvellous future developments. It was begun under the auspices of Cardinal Geissel, who asked that religious might be sent to a house built for them by the charity of a great benefactor. Religious were sent to it from Munich. They travelled by the Rhine from Mayence, where they stayed at the Good Shepherd convent, and were much edified by the great hospitality and regularity of the Community.

The hearty co-operation of pious persons, and especially of a priest named Schmidt, made the Cologne mission comparatively easy. It was a work destined to take deep root in that Catholic soil which, like that of Rome itself, has been watered with the blood of many martyrs, and which in its bishops and priests has always kept pure the sound traditions of the Christian faith.

Among the several Communities that flourish in the shadow of the *Dom* of Cologne, a wonder of Gothic architecture, the Good Shepherd was soon to attain to an important place. It owed much of its prosperity to the zeal and prudence of the first Prioress, Mother St. Peter von Kleindorf. Born at Innsprück, her father was an Austrian officer, her mother a member of one of the most respected families in Cologne—the Fauveaus. From the time of her mother's death she had been left to the care of her grandmother, who had given her a brilliant education. But, despising

ing all the advantages of her position in the world, her mind, with all its gifts, was attracted to the cloister. She entered the Novitiate at Munich at the age of thirty-four, and became noticeable for her exactitude in the humblest offices.

Mother Pelletier had remarked her among her daughters, and, when the convent at Berlin was founded, it was to her she confided the difficult task of organisation in a Protestant city. She had succeeded in the work, and given striking evidence of her powers, attracting many friends to the Order. But it remained for her to do a still greater work at Cologne, a town with whose generous faith she was familiar, and where, under her rule, which lasted thirteen years, the work committed to her by Mother Pelletier flourished. Her health was delicate; her piety was the supernatural source of her energies.

CHAPTER XXVII

FOUNDATIONS AND MISSIONS

1863-1864

Departure of religious for Melbourne—Mother Pelletier's instructions—Journal of the missionaries—Talca—Port Saïd—Postponement of the elections—Visit of Father Suchet—Faënza.

OF the five parts into which the modern world is divided, only Australasia was now without religious of the Good Shepherd. Another conquest, therefore, remained to tempt the zeal of the servant of God.

Many sheep were to enter the fold of the Good Shepherd in Australia, that land of prodigious developments, which, within the memory of men still alive, has become another America in trade and population.

Towns spring up there as if by magic, people to inhabit them arrive by hundreds of thousands, and in some—Melbourne, for instance—the industrial progress has been more rapid than in any European city. The streets are all lighted by electricity; the telephone connects all houses of business.

But not only in material things has there been this wonderful advance; the growth of the Catholic Church has been equally remarkable.

On the 10th January 1863, in words full of

emotion, Mother Pelletier announced to her daughters, at a General Chapter, the good news that Dr. Gould, Bishop of Melbourne, had written to ask for a foundation in his episcopal city, which she had no hesitation in accepting. She had begun the chapter with the words: "Learn of Me that I am meek and humble of heart," and, after giving out the names of the Sisters chosen by God for the mission, went on to expound to her daughters the deep humility of the Infant Jesus laid in the crib, and said that the house at Melbourne, being intended only for penitents (a work always the chief object of their vocation), had a special claim to their interest.

Four Sisters were appointed, and then Mother Pelletier solemnly gave out another name, that of a religious who was to accompany the Missionary Sisters to Liverpool for the sole purpose of taking care of them, and acting the part of their guardian angel. She was an old member of the Community, and spoke English. The servant of God specially recommended the Australian mission to the prayers of the whole Congregation.

On the 10th February, the Community being assembled in the chapel for their morning meditation, Mother Foundress called the four Sisters to her, and placed on the head of each a wreath of flowers. She then led them to the Holy Table, where, kneeling close to her, each received Holy Communion, the penitents meanwhile singing a hymn of thanksgiving.

The Mass ended, and all hearts stirred with emotion,

she gathered the Community round the altar of the Blessed Virgin, which was decked with flowers and lights, and thus addressed her daughters:—

“Our Lord, when sending forth His Apostles on their mission, spoke these words: ‘Behold, I send you as sheep among wolves.’ We, also, my dear daughters, might repeat them to you. For as sheep do we send you among wolves. Wherever you go you will find wolves, for in all places you will find evil. But you must ever be docile sheep. As we told you this morning when crowning you, it may happen that in those far-off lands you will not meet with the sorrows that often fill our chalice to the brim.

“Go, then, beloved daughters, go with great courage, great confidence. You are to-day making a great sacrifice. You are giving up Ireland, your country; France, which you love so well; the Mother House, where you have been so lovingly sheltered. But on the other side you participate in many prayers; the Community prays, the foundations pray, the penitents pray. Go, then, in all confidence.”

The new Superior then made her protestation of fidelity at our Lady’s altar, at the close of which Mother Foundress intoned the *Laudate*, which the Community sang.

Before embarking at Liverpool, where, under the conduct of their “guardian angel,” they safely arrived, the four missionary religious received a letter from the servant of God, filled with her last recommenda-

tions. In answering it they said, "Believe it, dear Mother, only for God, only to save souls, could one leave you. The love of our beautiful vocation takes us away, but our hearts will always be at Angers."

This was their last farewell in Europe. The voyage, lasting many months, was very trying on account of sickness; but nothing abated their courage, which they kept up by talking to one another of their Mother, her kindness, her teaching, her example.

Their travelling diary, under March 12th, says: "A splendid morning; it rejoices the hearts of these poor travellers. Although exiled from our dear Angers, we still are there in spirit; we are present at the feast in preparation there; we take our places in the beloved home; we rejoice in the tenderest of Mothers, and measure our gratitude by the breadth and depth of the ocean, whence we send her our good wishes and prayers."

"13th March.—The feast of our much loved, much revered Mother General. We hasten to decorate her portrait, and to offer her our loving wishes. We are sure it is as a compliment to St. Euphrasia that the sweet Jesus has sent us this splendid weather."

Two days later the journal tells of their having heard a Mass on board ship, said by Mr. Crone. "My good, my revered Mother, think of the joy of your poor little missionaries in being present at the adorable Sacrifice."

On the 17th, feast of St. Patrick, Apostle of Ireland, they have another Mass, and pray to their holy patron

for their "worthy Mother General, who is so generously kind to her Irish daughters."

On St. Joseph's day, 19th, another Mass. "We pray for our Mother, knowing that St. Joseph is the Saint of her predilection, and that there is nothing he can refuse us."

They write also of the glories of the tropical heavens. "We could never have believed," they say; "no description, nothing but our own eyes, could ever have made us believe the world could be so beautiful. We mean God's work in nature, His Creation. The firmament is so brilliant, the sea so grand, the moon so bright. We have never seen anything so exquisitely beautiful as to-day—such beauty as is given to no pen to describe."

On the 1st April they crossed the line, and the vessel entered calm waters; but there was thunder and incessant lightning, and torrents of rain, together with burning heat.

"We have had plenty of time for reflection. Our thoughts are always at Angers," they wrote; "that remembrance is constantly present in our minds and hearts. We speak to one another of our revered Mother General; the last words of encouragement she spoke to us are the consolation of our souls."

At length Cape Horn was doubled, and the tempest-tossed vessel soon afterwards reached Melbourne, where the Sisters found more letters awaiting them from Mother Foundress. Fortified by her counsels they had begun their journey; hardly had they disem-

barked than, at the very outset of their mission, the same voice spoke to them.

“ Oh, what happiness ! A thousand thanks to you, dear Mother, for the comfort you have given us. Thank you for thinking of the very words we needed.”

All through the 127 days of the voyage the Sisters' thoughts, as we have said, were constantly flying back to Angers, to the beloved cloister where their religious life had found its first home in the Novitiate, but not in mere empty regrets. If they often thought of Angers, often of the dear face of their Mother, it was to fortify themselves, to strengthen their souls for the work she had given them to do, and to do it as she would have it done.

No sooner, therefore, had they bought a house than it became their object to make it a fit abode for religious of the Good Shepherd, and very soon the large building at Abbotsford (which had been long untenanted, except by night birds and wild animals) was changed into a neat, clean convent. The property attached to it was full of fruit-trees laden with fruit, especially lemon-trees, and watered by a running brook.

The house was no sooner ready than penitents came in such numbers that before long there was no room for more. Great graces signalised those early days.

One young lady, belonging to Melbourne, came to pay them a visit, but, moved by the Divine Spirit, she asked to be received into the Order, and took the habit, in spite of the entreaties of her family.

A penitent, one among the first, died in the most

pious dispositions saying these words: "Ah! thank you, thank you. Write to your Mother General and tell her all the gratitude of my heart. She has sent her dear daughters to this distant country to help to save my soul, and many many other souls. I will ask God——" The sentence was finished in heaven.

Abbotsford was soon a faithful image of the Mother House, the living spirit of the Foundress ruling it. There were the same classes, the same number of them, the same subdivision into diverse categories; there were the same devotions to St. Germaine, as patron of the bakery; to our Blessed Lady and St. Joseph, as custodians of the garden; the same practice of the Way of the Cross.

The Superior, Sister Mary of St. Joseph Doyle, was Irish. She was a native of King's County, born near the fine forest of Roscore. Her childhood had been spent in the peaceful convent of Rahan, and she and one of her Sisters brought with them to the Good Shepherd at Angers the qualities of persevering zeal which are characteristic of Irish missionaries. She was Superior at Melbourne for six years, and made the convent one of the most flourishing houses of the Order.

The bouquet for Mother Foundress' feast, in February 1863, was composed of three foundations: one at Port Saïd, in Egypt; two in Chili, of which one was at Talca, the other a second house in Santiago. Mother Pelletier prefaced her announcement of all this

good news with the words, "Mary kept all these things in her heart."

"Dear daughters," she continued, "how many things there are to be kept in the heart. But let us also remark that if our Blessed Lady knew when to be silent she knew also when to speak. How admirably did she speak, for instance, when she visited her cousin Elizabeth! Then it was she uttered those words: 'My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.'

"Thus must we also know both when to speak and when to be silent about our graces and our crosses, for the two are always mingled."

The foundation at Talca was made at the request of the then parish priest of the town, Dr. Michel Raphael Prado, a Cathedral Canon. The second house at Santiago was that of Don Michel Mary Guëmes Fernandez, a minister of state, and was to be used for the detention of prisoners. The foundation at Port Saïd was made at the request of Mgr. Pascal Vuicic, Vicar-Apostolic at Alexandria.

Mother Pelletier henceforth redoubled her loving care of the daughters who soon were to leave her. Ever thinking of the absent ones, she always lavished generous attention on those about to be parted from her.

Amidst the brightness of St. Euphrasia's feast, we find her mindful of the Sisters travelling to Australia: "Perhaps my poor children are even now tossed by tempest, yet thinking of us and of everything at Angers."

The Port Saïd mission specially interested her, for it was to be on somewhat new lines. The Sisters, in addition to their usual classes, were to have charge of a hospital, founded by the Suez Canal Company, for poor sailors of every nation and religion, invalided in the East by climate or hardship.

The Sisters travelled to Alexandria in company with several hundred Muslim pilgrims bound for Mecca, and believing firmly that to die on the way there would be to go straight to Paradise; this so excited the Sisters' compassion that they longed more than ever to convert souls and sacrifice themselves for the salvation of the world.

From Alexandria to Port Saïd their way lay through the desert, that land of Gessen which the Israelites left to return to the Promised Land. They travelled through the Sinaitic plains by long stages, one of which brought them to Rameses almost the first spot where the Israelites halted.

Through this desert also must have passed the Holy Family, when, during the flight into Egypt, they rested at Memphis and Old Cairo.

The Coptic Calendar commemorates the coming of the Holy Child into the land of the Pharaohs. A tree which gave Him shelter is still venerated by the faithful, also a spring which welled up at the prayer of our Blessed Lady, when, driven away from Memphis because of their poverty, the holy travellers halted at the gate of the city near the garden of Balm.

The lessons in Christian charity and of the mystic beauty of Christian virginity taught by those holy sojourners, religious of the Good Shepherd, had come after an interval of 1800 years to revive the darkened hearts of the poor Egyptian people.

Placed at the entrance of the canal which connects with Europe the ancient world of India and China, the Port Saïd establishment developed as if by miracle, blossoming with the rapidity of those Eastern flowers which, fructified by light and heat, spring out of the ground and blossom in a few days' time. In a few years it became the scene of extraordinary activity. There were African patients and Asiatic patients; the Abyssinian side by side with the Englishman, the Muslim with the Catholic. But the hospital was only part of the Sisters' work; they had also classes for penitents and orphans, schools for boarders and day scholars.

In the regular course the proper time for the Mother General to be elected would have fallen within the Octave of the Ascension, 1863. The American War, however, then at its height, rendered it difficult for the Superiors of that country to travel. In several cases, too, Mothers Provincial and Prioresses had begun alterations or enlargements in their houses which an abrupt change of Government might have checked or hindered. These reasons being laid before the Cardinal Protector, and by him submitted to the Pope, the Holy Father allowed the election to be postponed till the following year.

This incident called forth new expressions of

Mother Pelletier's gratitude towards the Holy See, and also prompted her to remind her daughters of the strength for their work they should derive from the thought that the Holy Father himself was in all circumstances their director and counsellor, and that they should obey not only his commands but his slightest wishes.

Some religious of the Visitation arrived at Angers in the spring of 1863 to prepare a foundation of their Order, and were hospitably entertained at the Good Shepherd. They returned before completing their preparations, and during both visits Mother Pelletier spared neither time nor trouble in showing her admiration and affection for her guests. When they arrived finally to settle in Angers, and the Bishop of Mans came for their installation in their new convent, he paid a visit also to the Good Shepherd, and celebrated the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at Mother General's request.

We have often spoken of the charm of Mother Pelletier's hospitality, of the impression her guests carried away with them of her having been exclusively occupied with their comfort and pleasure. In the case of religious hospitality being claimed solely in the name of Jesus Christ, her care and attention were redoubled. She delighted, moreover, in feeling that she was, in some sort, paying the debt she owed other Communities. Her daughters had been so often hospitably received in convents when planting new foundations in foreign soil. This interchange of

fraternal charity, this union in Jesus Christ, particularly delighted her.

Not long after the last visit of the Visitation nuns, Father Suchet, Superior of the convent at El Biar, and now also Vicar-General of Algiers and Chaplain to the Navy, paid her a visit which came afterwards to be known in the Community as the "*Feast of Expansions*." It was a season in which all hearts dilated. Father Suchet, it will be remembered, whilst missionary of France, residing at Tours, had preached Retreats at the refuge, and heard the confessions of Mother Pelletier, at that time either a simple religious or mistress of penitents. He had then encouraged her in her great design of extending the Order, and enlightened her with his counsel as to the best means to adopt for the fulfilment of her mission. He had gone over the matter with her, recognising the Divine Voice in the call urging her to found the Good Shepherd.

Thirty years had elapsed since then, and now when they met again he saw her surrounded by her great flocks, and Foundress of no less than eighty houses. His joy was more than he could keep within bounds. To a certain extent, too, it was his own work he beheld, for, amid opposition of every sort, he had always supported and encouraged her.

"Well," said he, on entering the Community-room, "and has not the grain of mustard-seed become a great tree? Then he went on to give an account of all that had happened at Tours, of which he had

been himself witness in the early days of Mother Pelletier's vocation. She had often said, "Father Suchet at Tours told me beforehand of everything that has happened."

Next day he addressed the Community in the chapel, spoke to them of the institution of a Superior-General, and repeated some edifying anecdotes in its history. "I will not rehearse to you all that has happened in your admirable Congregation: facts speak for themselves. Anything I might add could only weaken that testimony. But this is the sum of it: all saintliness consists in doing God's will, and this your Mother General has done. She has been only an instrument in the hand of God, but a docile one."

Father Suchet was obliged to go to Paris on business connected with the diocese of Algiers, but returned to Angers, Mother Pelletier requiring his advice. This second visit was even more precious to the Community than the first.

"Had I to write the history of France," he said, "I should put the establishment of your Congregation in the first rank of signal blessings. Other religious Orders work to convert sinners in general, you to convert sinners in particular. You are co-redemptrixes. Only to think that from France has come that Mother House which now has over eighty offshoots."

The approval, the support, and counsel of such men of God as Father Suchet, one who traced throughout

her great work the guiding Hand of Providence, were very dear to Mother Pelletier.

In 1863 she continued with ardour to found houses. Among them that of Monza was attended by such extraordinary circumstances that it seemed to the Foundress and her daughters especially ordered by God.

A pious girl, Josephine Milani, grieving over the sad fate of young women fallen into evil paths, had long wished to found some small institution for the rescue of penitents. In this pious design our Blessed Lady herself deigned to encourage her, and one day showed her in a vision a religious of the Good Shepherd, at the same time uttering these words: "Behold, my child, the Congregation which will fulfil all your desires by coming to snatch from hell its prey. Make haste to open the sheepfold, and soon you will attain what you desire."

At that time Josephine was entirely ignorant, like every one about her, as to what Order belonged the Sister wearing the white habit our Lady had shown her. Meantime attempts were made to induce her to join some ladies in Milan who had a house for penitents. Josephine, however, preferred to await God's time. She was poor, but she relied on Him to fulfil the promises of our Blessed Lady.

Shortly after this her confessor, Father Gobia, Provincial of the Barnabites, went to Turin and heard of the Good Shepherd, its purpose, its rule. This being evidently a sign from God, he entered into communica-

tion with the Provincial, and great was his astonishment at discovering that her religious habit was the same as that his penitent had described.

Josephine Milani then wrote to Mother Pelletier, who accepted the foundation and ordered the Provincial of Turin to visit Monza and make the necessary arrangements. The Provincial went straight to Josephine's house, and when she threw off her large black traveling mantle, the girl, seeing her in her white habit, fell at her feet crying out, "Yes! yes! this is what I saw; only the shoes are different."

The Provincial had put on black shoes for the journey instead of the untanned leather ones, which are the rule.

Next day Josephine saw her at the Holy Table in the complete costume of the Order, with her large white choir mantle. This sight moved her to deep emotion; she felt that now the Divine will was about to be accomplished, and, her eyes filled with tears, kept repeating, "No, nothing is wanting. She is just what I saw."

Her desire to behold in Mother Pelletier the living embodiment of the zeal which had created so large a number of homes for penitents was so intense that, when religious of the Good Shepherd arrived (April 8th, 1863), at Monza, to begin their work, she left for Angers. Her four companions also left, but entered the Novitiate at Turin. Josephine returned to Monza after spending five years with Mother Foundress.

A second convent was now asked for at Cincinnati,

and as the work was intended to reach a very abandoned class, that of criminals, the proposal was warmly welcomed by Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia. Mrs. Sarah Peter had for five years been urging upon the authorities of the town that it would be highly advisable to allow religious of the Good Shepherd to take charge of female convicts. Her representations were supported by Dr. Purcell, and the mayor, Mr. Hatch, at last yielded.

The Sisters, anxious to spare the feelings of their charges, called the house a *School of Reform*, to avoid the disgrace attaching to the name of prison. It was a work in which Mother Pelletier took from first to last the greatest interest. Nothing ever delighted her so much as to hear of the conversion of abandoned souls, to know that fewer offences were committed against the Divine Majesty. The poor creatures brought to the Cincinnati Reformatory, many of whom came there without the least notion of their duty to God and their neighbour, entered a new world under the guidance of the Sisters. Two years after the house was founded, a letter from the Superior (Sister St. Stanislaus Cusack) to Mother General tells her that the Archbishop himself administers the Sacraments to the dear convicts—to some baptism and first Communion, to others Confirmation.

A little band of Sisters left the Mother House at Angers on the 18th March 1863, under St. Joseph's protection, to undertake similar work at Santiago. They were to have charge there of a prison for women, and were met on their arrival by the Governor

of the province, Don Charles Antinez. While a house was being prepared for their reception, the nuns often visited their future charges, and were always received with cries of joy and clapping of hands. "Little Mother, when are you coming to stay?" was the constant question. When their house was ready the Sisters entered on their work, and, as usual, thought before all else of their great charge—souls to be reconciled to God. A retreat was begun, the preacher's words producing such an effect that when he talked of death, the last judgment, and hell, he was often interrupted by the women's sighs and sobs. It was touching, at the close of this retreat, when the day came for the Communion, to see women of all ages, and many of whom had lived for years without the Sacraments, approach the Holy Table with such softened hearts that not a few made their thanksgiving with tears of pious joy. The power of grace in the heart was so strong, and its manifestation so uncontrollable, that the sound of the chaplain's voice was lost in the sobs of his hearers when he tried to make the act of thanksgiving aloud.

The religious brought order where disorder had reigned, peace after turbulence, the pure joy of religion to succeed the sorrow that accompanies sin. Mother Pelletier had trained all her daughters to make exterior order and cleanliness the outward sign of interior peace and purity of conscience, and to esteem them as virtues. They had bought proper clothes for their charges, and put suitable furniture

into their refectory and class-rooms. Hitherto these poor women had been accustomed to sit on their heels, and to see chairs for their use delighted and amazed them.

As in other cases, so here, many of the prisoners wanted to stay on with the nuns when their term of imprisonment had expired, but some only could be kept, owing to the narrow limits of the house. Soldiers had been stationed by the authorities at the gate to ensure order, but after the arrival of the Sisters no such guard was needed. The only occupation left to the soldiers was that of doing errands for the Community.

After the religious had spent three years in the prison, they and their charges were transferred to the convent of St. Rose, a house bought for the purpose by the Chilian Government.



Doluit, à Angers.

Phot. J. Royer, Nancy.

BON PASTEUR A BALTIMORE.

CHAPTER XXVIII

ELECTIONS—BALTIMORE—LOUVAIN

1864

Mother Pelletier's kindness to her daughters—Elections—Instructions—Mgr. Faraud—Love of missions—Finchley near London—Baltimore—Louvain—Mother de Stransky's death.

THE year 1864, a year of blessing to the Good Shepherd, began with a favour highly valued by the servant of God. This was a letter from Pius IX., expressing warm affection for the Institute, written in reply to her good wishes offered for the New Year. After reading it aloud to her daughters, she allowed each in turn to kiss the signature.

The deferred elections were to take place in May, and the Mother began early to prepare for the suitable reception of the Superiors and delegates from other convents, expected at the Mother House. Some additions were made to it, some new buildings erected ; but preparations of this sort were by no means her chief care. Her principal thought was the preparation of what we may call the soul of the Community. It was her chief desire to make the Mother House a model to the foundations, by its exact observance of the Rule, in its pervading spirit of charity and piety

in the perfect order reigning in its various sections and classes.

For months beforehand she said repeatedly to her daughters: "We shall have a great gathering. Our Sisters, who come from the four quarters of the globe, must find perfect regularity at the Mother House. They will come here, worn out with work, to refresh their zeal, to drink in, at its source, the true religious spirit; and then leave us, to shed it abroad on those places to which obedience sends them. Some will see Angers for the first time, and these must find it a model house. Apply yourselves thoroughly therefore, my dear Sisters, to the practice of our Rules and Constitutions, of our observances, even of the least among them."

The successive arrivals of the Superiors and delegates gave her indescribable joy—"Joy," she said, "such as one feels but once in a lifetime. I shall never experience the like again."

It became still more apparent when, at length, she saw gathered around her the great assembly of her daughters of divers nations and divers tongues.

The month of Mary was opened with unusual solemnity. Flowers, garlands, and lights beautified the cloisters and enclosure, and at the evening procession through the gardens, four Mother Prioresses were the bearers of our Lady's statue.

On the 12th of the month thirty-three postulants were clothed, a function which had been deferred for these feasts. The evening before, Mother Pelletier addressed them in these words:—

“ St. Francis Borgia said to postulants of the Society of Jesus, ‘ You are the children of saints.’ Then, with St. Bernard, he added, ‘ Why should not you do what the saints have done?’ These words of St. Francis Borgia we also address to you, my dear Sisters : we may, indeed, say to you that our founders were saints.”

The elections had been fixed for Thursday, 19th May, so, on the preceding Saturday, the deposition of Mother Pelletier took place. By her desire the stall usually occupied by the Superior was filled by a statue of the Blessed Virgin, to symbolise the authority Mary had always had, and would have, in the Institute of the Good Shepherd.

On the 19th the Bishop of Angers came to the convent and said Mass ; then the elections took place. Mother Pelletier was again elected Superior-General. When the result of the vote was made known in the Community, the news ran through the convent like lightning. At the sound of the bells all flocked to the chapel in a state of indescribable enthusiasm, and the *Te Deum* and *Ave Maris Stella* were sung with joyous emotion.

At half-past two the Bishop, with his Vicars-General, returned and came to the Community-room, all the religious being there to receive his blessing and advice. The servant of God, with her eager desire of giving others pleasure, called each Superior in turn to kneel at the prelate’s feet and kiss his pastoral ring. The Provincials presented the religious of their respective

provinces. One Provincial, the Superior from Turin, recited some complimentary verses in French. Touched by these pious attentions, and also, no doubt, by the contrast between the Good Shepherd of to-day and that of thirty years before, Mgr. Angebault addressed a moving allocution to Mother Pelletier's daughters. He spoke to them of their Mother as their consolation and support in their mission, "A mother," said he, "known to all by her solicitude and tenderness. Go where you may," continued he, "her heart will go with you and be near you." In the account of this ceremony which appeared in the *Semaine religieuse d'Angers*, the writer remarks that, during the Bishop's visit, the servant of God, humble and modest, like all true friends of God, seemed, in the common joy of those about her, altogether to forget that it was she who for thirty years had been the source of this widespread zeal for the salvation of souls throughout the world. She had come to Angers poor, with but two companions, and trusting only to the goodness of God and the charity of men for support. Now, more than 3000 religious of the Good Shepherd, calling her Mother, had carried the knowledge of our Lord to the utmost limits of the earth.

The elections were followed by the nominations of local Superiors and their assistants; these nominations were an opportunity for the Mother to address her daughters in exhortations of burning charity. As we have heretofore often remarked, she was a born orator. Her fervent thrilling words, the keen glance

of her penetrating eyes, her appropriate use of quotations from Holy Scripture, made a powerful impression on her hearers.

It was in these fervent addresses that she became most truly the apostle of her daughters, communicated to them her own spirit, and kindled in their hearts an undying zeal for souls. From these instructions they came away longing to devote themselves, ready to start at the least sign from her to undertake the greatest labours. The following are some of her words:—

“How consoling to find ourselves gathered together ! My dear daughters, how happy it makes me to be surrounded by you, to see the affectionate charity, the peace, the spirit of union that reign among you. None here is a stranger to the others. Americans, English, Irish, Germans, Italians, French—all have but one heart and one mind. You reanimate my courage, which sometimes is inclined to waver. This work is indeed God’s work, who will ever keep you all in His own Heart.”

She compared their meeting to the feast of Tabernacles among the Jews, and exhorted them to praise God and thank Him ; recommended to them anew a love of the Institute, and spoke of the Church of Rome, whose slightest counsels they ought to follow. Then with prudence and charity she confided to them the history, not only of her past sufferings in maintaining the rights of the Institute, but of what she was then undergoing for the same cause, and said she turned to Rome for peace.

“Often,” she said, “terrible storms rise against us ; at times we are surrounded by darkness ; at such times our eyes turn to Rome, and from thence we receive help and light.”

These elections of 1864 were her triumph ; in this gathering together of religious from all parts of the world she saw the realisation of all the prayers and longing desires with which the providence of God had inspired her for this marvellous extension of the Order of the Good Shepherd. Her joy and affection were unbounded ; with untired charity she lent an ever ready ear to each individual Prioress, listened with interest to the progress and the needs of each house, and authorised improvements in this or that new foundation.

When at length the day of farewell was over, and the Community at Angers left in its normal state, turning to her daughters, she said, “I think our good God asks of us great perfection, after all we have lately seen. We have had great examples of humility, charity, obedience, and self-denial. At a word our Sisters have gone away, some to the east, some to the west, without a thought of self. All of them said to me, ‘Whether I return to my Mission, or stay here, or go elsewhere, is a matter of indifference to me, provided only I am obedient.’

“If you, my dear daughters, had been less cordial to our Sisters who came to the elections, they would not have been so happy with you. We have seen only charity and union everywhere.”

She thought (and no doubt truly) that her daughters had grown in the virtues of their state by contact with their exemplary Sisters, and that in consequence all made more rapid progress in religious perfection. Holy emulation has no doubt this effect on souls, and these new apostles, in hundreds, come forth from their *cænaculum* ready to conquer the world to Jesus Christ.

The departure was followed by days darkened by sorrow for Mother Pelletier. To have lost sight of those members of her family whom for a month she had seen daily, whose presence she had enjoyed, gave her intense pain. "Would that I might root up these flowers and plant cypresses in their place," she said one day in the garden, in her usually picturesque style.

The Superiors of Munich and Algiers stayed some time beyond the other Prioresses, and were the recipients of her most touching attentions.

Letters also soon began to arrive, bringing her mingled joy and sorrow. Her American daughters, especially, caused her much anxiety. A dangerous sea voyage, the various minor annoyances incidental to a journey, but above all, the danger of an impending war, which threatened some of the foundations with ruin, kept her for months in a state of anxiety. All through those months she constantly reminded the Community at Angers to pray for their American Sisters.

In July Father Suchet came again to Angers. He

had accompanied the remains of Marshal Pellissier from Algiers, and would not leave France without visiting his dear convent of the Good Shepherd. It was a great joy to Mother Pelletier, not only to receive and entertain him, but to hear him say to the Community, "I have often been shown honour and respect, but I prefer to be among the religious of the Good Shepherd, where all are employed in labouring for the salvation of souls. I have been director of several Communities, but of all religious Orders yours is the one I revere the most highly. You, religious of the Good Shepherd, carry on our Lord's own mission, who came not for the just but for sinners. Every priest who loves souls will also love the Good Shepherd."

Their own experience had taught the religious the truth of these words, for hardly a month ever passed without a visit from some foreign Bishop, who was anxious to become acquainted with the cradle of an Order which had sent forth missionaries for the fulfilment of one of the most delicate functions in the work of saving souls.

In 1864 alone, nine missionary Bishops paid passing visits to the convent of Angers. One of them, Mgr. Farraud, Vicar-Apostolic of Athabaska Mackenzie, lived among and evangelised the Esquimaux. Feeling that he was in presence of those capable of understanding the cost at which souls should be redeemed, he gave the Sisters graphic accounts of his apostolic journeys through North American ice and snow. His kind face

and manner, his gentleness, the affectionate zeal which exhaled from all his reports of his work, seemed to the Sisters a commentary on the words of our Lord promising His peace to those who spread His Gospel. Mgr. Farraud had lived so long among the Esquimaux, and talked only their language, that he had, to a certain extent, forgotten French, his mother tongue, but this difficulty only edified his audience the more.

To the servant of God herself, such missionary Bishops as these, who devoted their whole life and energy to go out and seek for souls, embodied the ideal of her Institute; they were the models she set before her daughters for imitation. When listening to their words as they told their story, always full of incident, often very touching, the words of men who had put their lives in peril, over and over again, for the salvation of their unknown brethren, she was full of gratitude to God that their apostolic spirit had found its echo in the hearts of her daughters. She herself was deeply moved by their words, recognising also that the esteem borne by such apostolic men for her Order was a proof that her work was the work of God.

Confirmed once more by the recent election in her charge of Superior-General, Mother Pelletier continued to carry on, with perhaps more generous ardour than before, the work of making foundations.

Large towns were no longer content with a single house. In London, the convent at Hammersmith was now too small for the number of classes. The Superior, Mother Mary of St. Francis de Sales Red-

cliffe, a worthy daughter of the Foundress, longed for the pure air and tranquillity of the country for the poor girls gathered out of the streets or brought from prisons, feeling that in such surroundings peace and religious feeling were more easily regained. A German poet has rightly represented the streets of great cities as teeming with diabolic spirits tempting men to vice, and the country, on the contrary, as inhabited by the angel of peace.

Mother Pelletier approved and encouraged Mother Mary of St. Francis de Sales in her plan, and saw with delight that her work was appreciated in London. England, once the island of saints, a country in which religious feeling is still deeply rooted, and where God and His laws are still held in respect, had made most important conquests to Catholicism, through the influence of examples of charity and self-sacrifice; and the generosity of the English is inexhaustible in aiding all charitable works.

Before long Mother St. Francis de Sales had obtained, by her fervent prayers to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, means to carry out her plan, and had bought a large piece of ground at Finchley, in the suburbs of the great metropolis, and here a large convent was to be built. The air at Finchley is so pure, the seasons so mild, that Mother St. Francis de Sales wrote to Mother General, "One might think oneself at Angers, to see the roses blooming in the gardens."

Cardinal Wiseman had given the necessary permissions for the foundation, with the flattering proviso



that the Provincial and Novitiate were still to remain in his diocese.

The day the first Mass was celebrated at the new convent at Finchley, the servant of God announced to her Chapter the foundation of a house at Baltimore in the United States. She reminded her daughters that at the Council of Baltimore the Bishops had expressed the wish to see houses of the Good Shepherd in all the chief American cities, and now Baltimore itself was making a beginning. "How much God loves our congregation," she exclaimed, while recommending to their prayers her American foundations, which God visibly protected, and which were developing under that protection, in spite of all the horrors war brings in its train. But, indeed, the farther souls stray from God, and the more victims their sins make, the more necessary does the work of the Good Shepherd become, the essence of which is reparation.

The charge for founding the house at Baltimore was intrusted by Mother Pelletier to the Superior of Louisville. She started on her mission, accompanied by some religious, on the feast of St. Ignatius, July 31st. The work, like every Catholic work in America, succeeded and grew; it soon became one of the most flourishing houses of the Good Shepherd. As did the seminaries and other communities at Baltimore, so has this work developed under the favour of the Archbishops, in particular of Cardinal Gibbons, who has always been the patron of the Christian working

classes, and therefore Mother Pelletier's Order appealed to his sympathies as dealing with that class.

Another Cardinal, Mgr. Engelbert, Archbishop of Mechlin, had asked for a foundation at Louvain in Belgium. The servant of God sent the Mother Provincial of France from Angers to open it, and install the new Community.

The instrument appointed by God to watch over the growth of this foundation was Father Legrelle, S.J., to whom also it owed the suggestion which gave it birth. It began very much as the Mother House had, in a building hired for three years, destitute of furniture and money. The religious were often without the means to provide the morrow's daily bread. But little by little the charity of the people of Louvain was aroused towards the work. Penitents came slowly and singly, but at the end of three years there were more than the house could lodge, and a change became imperatively needed. Close to it was a property belonging to the Marquis van Kerkhove, which he had no thought of parting with at that time, but which appeared to the Superior as the very place providentially intended for the work of the Good Shepherd. She, however, made St. Joseph her only confidant for some time, then told Father Legrelle, who, full of confidence in God, went to the Marquis, a man as generous as he was Christian. This step was successful, the Marquis saying he "was delighted to give up his place to a convent, especially to a convent of the Good Shepherd," and soon afterwards the

white Sisters and their beloved flocks were installed there.

Where Christian science flourishes there flourishes Christian charity. Louvain, a town fruitful in devotion of every kind, the seat of a prosperous Catholic university, was to possess a new convent.

The servant of God with advancing years saw falling around her one by one, stricken by the hand of death, the religious who had co-operated with her in building up the Order, and many of whom had founded houses. They belonged to that first generation commonly found at the beginning of a great undertaking, heroic souls commissioned by God to establish the work on a solid basis in spite of contradiction. The foundress, with her singularly affectionate nature, had been attached to these Mothers from the very beginning; they were her auxiliaries, her companions in labour and in founding the Institute; and as death claimed one after another, she mourned deeply but with resignation for each, and was thus a fresh cause of edification to her Community.

In 1865 she lost Mother Mary of St. Philomena (Baroness de Stransky), a religious who took with her to the convent at Algiers, of which she was Prioress, all the virtues of her Superior General, that spirit of devotedness, of self-denial, that high courage in overcoming difficulties, and regularity in observing every point of the Rule which were characteristic of Mother Pelletier.

"Mother Mary of St. Philomena," she said to her

daughters, "was a perfect religious. Things very hard to nature and humbling to pride seemed to attract her from the very first day she entered this house, and, rising step by step, higher and higher, she at last reached the summit of perfection. Her obedience was proof against anything, and above all, she was deeply humble.

"She founded our house in Algiers in the midst of poverty and suffering. When she first arrived, she was attacked by illness caused by the heat and the dirt of the quarters allotted to her, which were so close she could hardly breathe. The Sisters of Charity carried her to the hospital, and there she spent the first days of her life in Africa, days she often spoke of afterwards as having been the happiest of her life." Another day Mother Pelletier, speaking to her Community of the lessons this apostolic soul had left her beloved Sisters, said, "We are very fond of reading the 'Lives of the Saints,' my dear daughters, because in them we find examples of all the several virtues; but how much happier for us when in our very midst, among our own Sisters, we find saints to imitate? Now our dear and deeply regretted Mother Prioress of Algiers was a soul of extraordinary sanctity. Prevented by God's grace from early childhood, she seems never to have lost her baptismal innocence. She was only five years old when, so clear was her vision of God's designs over her soul, that she resolved to devote her life to the salvation of her neighbours. You know how nobly she corresponded with these designs.

In her life we admire her zeal, her self-denial, her spirit of self-sacrifice, all of which she carried to the highest perfection. With the Apostle she might have said, 'I live, yet no longer I, but Christ lives in me' (Gal. ii. 20). She lived in a constant state of self-immolation, living only for God and dying to self. Pray then, my dear daughters, that she who never took any rest here may find eternal rest.

"Her death is one of the greatest sorrows I have experienced since I have been at the head of this dear congregation. For some time my mind has been taken up with the thought of how to make you understand what a life consecrated to the salvation of souls means, such a life as was hers whom we mourn, whose name I cannot utter—a life of work and mortification.

"I am convinced that this dear daughter died a victim to her devotedness. Yes, I think she was a great saint, but also a great victim. This Superior was one of the most beautiful fruits the tree of the Good Shepherd has ever produced. If we may not hope to attain to her sanctity, at least we all may imitate her in some one thing, for we all are planted in religion as she was—all have the same faith, the same vows, and the same God."

The heart of Mother Mary of St. Philomena was brought to the monastery at Angers; this was a grace highly esteemed by Mother Pelletier. She had it placed in the cloister behind St. Radegunda's altar, where already rested the heart of Mother St. Anselm Debrais, who died in 1840, at Angers, in the odour of sanctity.

CHAPTER XXIX

SUEZ—RANGOON—TRIALS

1865-1866

Mother Pelletier's daughters at Suez—Visit to Belle Fontaine—Convent at Rangoon—Mother Pelletier in the Novitiate—Her loyalty and affection to the Holy See—Her spirit of fortitude—Departure of religious for Melbourne.

As we have seen, admiration for Mother Pelletier's work brought requests for foundations from all sides.

There were already two houses in Egypt (one at Port Saïd, the other at Cairo), but a third was now asked for. Suez, situated at the mouth of the Red Sea, in the desert, urgently needed a hospital for soldiers returning from the East; and, daily increasing in size, was scarcely less in need of some secure asylum for children, exposed here, as elsewhere in unfinished settlements, to the many dangers of neglect. This twofold work was now offered to Mother Pelletier's daughters, religious already acclimatised in the East, and still more inured to the most trying ministry of the Catholic apostolate. The East had a peculiar attraction for the zeal of Mother Pelletier, and she always considered that Europe owed Eastern lands, now plunged in ignorance and error, and groaning under

Satan's yoke, the spiritual help of missionaries, for from the East the first Apostles had come to Europe.

But the Good Shepherd not having been founded for hospital work, she only accepted Suez on the same conditions as Port Saïd. The hospital was to be served by *tourière* Sisters under the direction of religious, who could take charge of the dispensary and linen.

The Canal Company built the convent, but the Sisters paid rent for it; and so once more the desert blossomed with the religious virtues, but this time brought from the West to the East. To the Arabs dwelling on the shores of the Red Sea the colony of Mother Pelletier's white Sisters was like a company of angels come down from heaven to relieve suffering, and to gather poor forsaken girls under their wing.

Shortly after announcing this foundation to her daughters, the servant of God received alarming news from the Superior at Cairo. Cholera, after devastating Alexandria, had broken out there. A panic as terrible as the disease itself was the immediate result. The Musulman authorities appeared to think of nothing but self-preservation. The Viceroy fled; most of the native officials followed suit, as well as all the wealthier classes. But, to their honour be it recorded, the French consuls stood firm to their posts. M. de Lesseps, hearing the news, hurried back from France to take his stand among his men engaged in excavating the canal. Organised methods of aiding the sick were started by M. Roustan, the consul-general. A reli-

gious of the Good Shepherd was put in charge of an ambulance sent about the streets to pick up those stricken by the pestilence, and bring them to the hospital. She and two of her Sisters paid with their lives for their devotedness. All three were in the prime of life, and had only been a few years on the mission, where their work hitherto had been the instruction, and above all the religious instruction, of poor little Arab and Turkish girls, brought to them by their mothers.

At the first sign of cholera, putting all their trust in God and in the grace of their sublime vocation, and consecrating to Him their house and children, the Sisters devoted themselves to nursing the sick.

Their first cry of alarm was addressed to their foundress, that dear Mother on whose sympathy they could ever surely rely, and who would, through united prayer, obtain grace for them to do their duty.

"When one of our houses suffers," said Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia to her daughters, "we all visit it in spirit. And this is as it ought ever to be. When Italy was at war, all of you were in Italy; you all suffered with your Sisters, all fought with them. Only yesterday our poor house at Algiers was on the cross, and you were all there in spirit. I rejoiced to see the sympathy you then showed. Now, to-day, it is the house at Cairo which suffers, and there likewise we must transport ourselves in the same way."

A few days later news of the death of Mother Mary

of St. John the Evangelist, Superior at Cairo, came. Almost every one in the house had been attacked by the pestilence. Five of the Preservation children and three Sisters died. The beauty of Mother St. John's glorious zeal had marked her for a worthy victim. She was only thirty-five, but had been ten years at Cairo, doing the work of an apostle among children. The French consul would not let Musulmans carry her remains to the grave. Four French Catholics volunteered to pay this last tribute of respect to one of whom obedience had made a heroine, this humble, modest, unassuming woman, who yet, by her death, had upheld the honour of her religion and of her country.

All through this time of anxiety the servant of God was also suffering on account of the trials of the Church, and losing no opportunity of showing her devotion to the Holy Father.

Mgr. Nardi, in 1865, paid a second visit to the monastery at Angers, and was charged by Mother General to present the Pope with her offering of Peter's Pence. After his departure, gathering her Community about her, she gave them an account of the lamentable straits to which the Italian Revolution had reduced His Holiness, and showed them how deeply she grieved, as a Catholic, at seeing him abandoned by all the European Powers.

Pius IX. was much touched by Mother Pelletier's expressions of feeling. In a letter signed by his own hand, he granted her two plenary indulgences for her

Community, one on the feast of the Good Shepherd, the other on that of the Immaculate Conception.

Shortly after Mgr. Nardi's visit the servant of God went to Cholet to see the church which her daughters were building. It was her desire that in all her convents the chapel which was inhabited by God Himself should be better than any other part of the house, and her joy was great when she saw the beautiful one at Cholet. From there she made a pilgrimage to La Trappe at Belle Fontaine, a distance of about 12 kilometres ($7\frac{1}{2}$ miles). A chapel there, dedicated to our Blessed Lady, is held in great veneration by all the neighbouring parishes.

It was given to Mother Pelletier to see every work of the church in its supernatural beauty. As she beheld the Trappists labouring in their abbey fields, some digging, some pruning, others driving cattle, she saw, as in a touching vision, the grand institutions of St. Benedict, of St. Bernard, and of the great monks of the Middle Ages. To her one aspect of the Christian religion was realised in its perfection by the Trappists of Belle Fontaine.

On her way back to Angers she stopped at Chanzeux to visit Count Theodore de Quatrebarbes. In the interval since her last visit he had gone forth like some Christian knight of old to fight for the Holy See, and now bore the title of Governor of Ancona. His own chivalrous spirit made him eminently capable of understanding and appreciating the work of the servant of God.

Every corner of this district, La Vendée of Anjou, is filled with edifying associations to a generous heart like that of Mother Pelletier: here a pilgrimage, there a church built at great cost; a little farther on some home from which a son had gone forth to serve the Pope. With its peaceful aspect, its tokens of popular piety everywhere, the whole land seemed to Mother Pelletier like the vast enclosure of some convent. Crosses are planted where the roads meet, and the peasant, as he passes by, lifts his cap, while the women make the sign of the cross.

Not a year now went by without additions to the number of foundations. In 1865 the servant of God sent some of her daughters to Rangoon, in Burmah, at that time a poor place, consisting chiefly of huts, but much resorted to by the natives on account of its famous temple of Dagon, the finest in Burmah. It stands 325 feet high, and is approached by four flights of steps at the four cardinal points. At its summit is a circular arrangement of golden and silver bells, which at every breath of wind sound harmoniously. Pilgrims come from early morning bringing offerings — fruits, candles, flowers — for Dagon, and may be seen prostrate, some before the idol itself, others on the ground or stairs.

The first house inhabited by Mother Pelletier's daughters was near the temple, and as they beheld it their hearts were moved to compassion for the poor souls deluded by idolatry.¹ Both races inhabiting the

¹ They are Buddhists.

country, the Burmese and the Carians, seemed to the Sisters to be buried in superstition and the errors of the transmigration of souls. One poor little girl who attended their school used to try and remember how she had lived formerly in an animal. The late king, who had been much beloved, had, it was commonly said, transmigrated into an elephant; great honour, therefore, was paid to this animal.

In order to reach these poor idolaters with greater facility, and to penetrate even into their jungles, the religious founded an Order of native Sisters, recruited from among their school children. These Sisters are dispersed among the villages, and have schools. Their Novitiate is made at Rangoon, where they are trained for their work, upon which they enter in a spirit of great humility and deep-rooted piety. They teach their pupils, besides, the catechism and the primary rudiments of education, needlework, and the art (totally unknown in Burmah) of keeping their houses neat and clean.

All houses of the Good Shepherd contain a great variety of classes and persons: choir Sisters, lay Sisters, penitents, and Preservation children. But Rangoon had an even greater variety, and all the classes were composed of children of many different races—Europeans, Eurasians, Burmese, and Malabarese. These little girls are by no means wanting in intelligence; they learn languages with facility, and use their needles cleverly. Of their own accord they become apostles in their families. One of them was very unhappy

because her mother remained a pagan, and she used to say, "I love my mother, and I want to see and to be with her in the next world; and I cannot indulge this hope, so sweet to Christians, as long as she is a pagan. This thought breaks my heart."

The poor child prayed for her mother so earnestly that she obtained for her the grace of baptism before she died. Another child made a rich marriage, and being thus able to afford it, offered the religious at Rangoon to pay the passage from Angers of another missionary Sister.

News from distant foundations always called forth the expression of Mother Foundress' gratitude to God, whose providential designs for the Institute she recognised. At the last Chapter held in 1865, she said to her daughters, "If I listened only to my heart, my dear daughters, I should wish you delights, consolations, and much sweetness. But you know that consolations are not for earth—they are reserved for the life hereafter. During the past year the Mother House has been tried by crosses of every sort; but you observe it has not been shaken—the Institute stands in all the strength of its foundations."

A sign of this vitality was to be found also in the fact of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia having been visited by six Bishops this year, all of whom came to discuss the great works of the Order with her. Three were French, the others were Mgr. Bourget, Bishop of Montreal, in Canada; Mgr. Sohur, Vicar-Apostolic of

Northern Cochin-China; and Mgr. Massaia, Vicar-Apostolic of Gallas, who was afterwards a Cardinal.

In the closing months of the year a new foundation was begun at Columbus by Sisters from Cincinnati. This convent soon made great progress, owing to the support of the benefactors at whose request it was opened, and also to the rapid growth of the town.

The health of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia had to some extent broken down beneath the burden of her many cares and labours, and although for months she struggled bravely on, she fell into a sort of fever towards the end of 1865. When the news of her illness reached the Superior at La Serena, in Chili, she wrote—

“BELOVED MOTHER,—It seems to me as if it would be an impossibility for me not to start at once for Angers if I knew you were seriously ill. In forty-five days I should be in France, and should be able to embrace you. The very thought of it makes me weep with joy.”

As it happened, however, this very Superior of Serena, Mother St. Ambrose Hennequin, died shortly after writing this letter; this was a great grief to the servant of God. Another trial was the death, only a little later, of the Superior at New Orleans, Mother St. Teresa de Schorlemer, a Sister who had returned from Bangalore to Angers to recruit her ruined health, but, devoured with zeal, had left again for America. The

voyage out was disastrous, for the ship fell into the hands of privateers. On arriving at New Orleans she was trying, as she said, to do her best to revive the spirit of Angers there, and must have been far from suspecting how near she was to her end, for on hearing that the Superior at La Serena was dead, she wrote home to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, "It seems that I am too wicked to die. My health is as good as before I went out to Bangalore."

Mother Pelletier had the greatest solicitude for the Novitiate of her Institute. There lay the future of all her great plans. She liked it to be both numerous and select. She used to ask God to send her postulants, and when the monastery gate opened to receive promising recruits her joy and gratitude were intense.

It was her delight to exercise personally the functions of Mistress of Novices, to train the hearts and minds of her novices, according to her ideal, to give them Father Eudes' solid training in their vocation. In the following instruction preserved by them she shows what qualities are true marks of the vocation of a religious of the Good Shepherd, and the dangers to which it is exposed.

"I look upon the Novitiate as the cradle of the Order; and I cannot refrain from telling you, my dear daughters, that either you will be the support and glory of our Congregation, or very much the reverse. You will be the glory of it, if you remain faithful to your holy vocation. Our Lord Jesus Christ has always, from the very beginning of this house at

Angers, given us most special proofs of His love, and has sent us subjects after His own Heart, religious full of zeal and fervour. How fervent our Novitiate has been ! what progress is made there in religious perfection !

“ Our first novices are now the apostles of the Institute : they have had particular calls to great works, and there will always be those who will persevere in the same spirit of holy and edifying zeal. Labour, then, my beloved daughters, to be one day of the number of those chosen privileged souls. God has called you as He did those first novices, and if you are faithful to Him you will be blessed as they were.”

Her discernment of spirits was truly marvellous, and had been acquired by her intimate dealing with souls. When working amongst the penitents she had watched some rising gradually from the depths of sin to the heights of perfection. She was also familiar with the many illusions to which persons who have reached certain stages of perfection are liable.

“ It sometimes happens, my dear daughters, that religious think themselves less fervent after entering religion than they were in the world. Shall I tell you whence this comes ? It arises from their noticing, as religious, certain defects to which they paid no heed at all before. In the brightness of the new light, the depths of their own nothingness is revealed to them : they are able, as it were, to count their imperfections one by one, and thus discover the greatness of their own misery.”

She went often to the Novitiate, especially at seasons of unusual solemnity, when Retreats were going on, professions at hand, or any particular trial oppressed the novices. In 1865, in spite of her great age, she was there very often to exhort them to patience and to submission to God's will in trial. The Superior of the convent had sent in his resignation, and no successor was appointed. No probationary examinations could take place; all professions had to be postponed. The whole Community, but more particularly the Novitiate, suffered. The Cardinal Protector, informed of the situation by Mother Foundress, did his best to remedy it, but it was out of his power to appoint a Superior from Rome.

For five months twenty-six postulants from different countries had been waiting for the habit: novices, whose two years had expired, were impatiently longing to give themselves to God and make their profession. The whole Community was in a state of suspense and moral suffering, which added a hundredfold to Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's own troubles. Yet she had patience, not only for herself, but for every one else. She went more often than usual to the Novitiate, and without the slightest sign of anything like resentment or bitter feeling towards the author of her sufferings, kept up the courage of her novices. "My children," would she say, "when we began the Generalat we had more obstacles and a great deal less strength than now. Pray and suffer, and we shall triumph in the end."

Prayer was indeed the source of all her own courage. On the 1st September, her trials being still prolonged, she said to her daughters, "We will begin a new Novena to our Lady of La Salette. We are having nine Masses said by the Oblate Fathers, who were delivered from great troubles of their own by the intercession of our Blessed Lady, invoked under this title. As we cannot be present at the Masses, we will, for nine days, recite the *Magnificat*, and three times the invocation, 'Our Lady of La Salette, pray for us.'"

Prayer had a calming effect, changing into spiritual sweetness trials which, by their long duration, had else become intolerable.

On September 28th the Mother appointed another Novena for her daughters for the same intentions. "This morning's Mass," she said, "was offered in honour of St. Philomena. You will make a Novena to this great Saint to obtain the grace we desire. Take great care to be faithful in this Novena, to practise holy poverty and charity, and you will see that our good God will bless you. At Holy Communion this morning I recommended the Novitiate to our Lord: postulants, novices, young professed, I had you all in the very depths of my heart. Out of my great love for you I would gladly hasten the moment of your deliverance from your trials. But yet we feel great consolation in seeing you so calm and resigned. I admire above all the perseverance of our good postulants. It is more beautiful to witness your fidelity,

my dear daughters, than to see a clothing. I too suffered during the eleven months that I was kept a postulant. But now I remember it no more, and so will it be with all of you. We have nothing really to fear, since our first Superior is our Holy Father the Pope. It is better to wait a little while. If, in these days of trial, we have to pass through some humiliations coming from outside, it grieves me far less than would any abuse within. It may be that God has some designs of great mercy towards us in these protracted trials. But then, dear children, how can you wonder at all this, if you consider the great good done in the congregation? All the powers of hell would like to burst their chains and fall upon us, and sweep us off the face of the earth. We snatch thousands of souls from their grasp, and the devil cannot see this without becoming furious. From the very beginning we have met with much opposition, but have come out victorious. And think you that now, when we are spread over all the five parts of the world, we should despair? By no means. The Lord will not leave us in affliction. He will answer the prayers we put up to Him, and the prayers in our behalf of so many others. Be always very faithful, my children. A Father of the Church has said, 'There is no more perfect image of the Divinity than the soul of the just remaining faithful to God under trial.' "

As postulants and novices were eager to give themselves to God, this time of waiting seemed very long; but the Mother, while supporting the whole Com-

munity, was far from foreseeing the end of this trial, which was particularly distressing, and harder to bear than poverty. But at last God took pity on His faithful servant. On the 13th November the Bishop delegated the convent chaplains to preside over the clothings and professions. A few days later Mother Pelletier spoke to her daughters in the Novitiate of the joy it had been to her to see them so constant in time of trial.

"The Novitiate at this present stage is called upon to fill an important page in the history of our Order. Yesterday the good Father who gave us our Retreat said to me, 'The trials you are passing through show that God is visiting you. Who founded you? The Cross. Who has multiplied your houses? The Cross. Who has brought you so many vocations? The Cross.'

"'Prayer obtains all things,' says St. Teresa. Yes, my children, and your prayers have obtained you everything. They were my own support, those prayers, in the time of trial, when I felt like one in some small bark tossed by the waves. A holy religious wrote to me, 'I love to see you with the crown of thorns on your head, like our Lord; your heart pierced with a sword, like Mary's!'"

She had a habit always of thinking of the sorrows of the Church and her visible head when suffering trial herself. "When we talk of the Institute," she said, "we should always speak also of the Church. What are our humiliations, what our troubles compared with those of the Sovereign Pontiff? The Institute follows

the example of the Church. The Church, the Sovereign Pontiff—these are the beginning and the end of all our words.”

It consoled her to send offerings to Pius IX., and she had a particular devotion to Peter's Pence. This year she sent a double offering, and with delicate tact sent it through Cardinal Patrizi, that it should reach His Holiness on the feast of the Immaculate Conception.

She used very often in prayer and meditation to revert in thought to Rome, and to consider the Representative of Jesus Christ, that, gazing upon the spectacle of his sufferings and of his desertion by earthly powers, she might find motives for courage in her own trials.

“When the Sovereign Pontiff suffers,” she said, “I feel as if I should die. This morning, at Holy Communion, I said, ‘My Lord and my God, Thy Vicar on earth is harassed by so many cares! I beseech Thee grant him a little rest.’”

Another day she said, “To-day, before the Blessed Sacrament, I thought if the Sovereign Pontiff has to leave Rome we will repeat those words of Holy Scripture, ‘Whithersoever thou goest I will go. Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God’ (Ruth i. 16). Where the Pope is, there the Church will be.”

In meditations of this kind the servant of God recovered her serenity of mind, and came forth ready again to go on with her great work, despite the gain-sayings of men and the jealousy of her enemies, who

never laid down their arms. There, too, she found that persuasive charity which exhaled from all her exhortations to her Community, telling them to be of good courage in meeting the manifold contradictions of this life.

“Do not be alarmed if you have to bear some little trials. The trees the husbandman cuts and prunes are always the best in the field. Be strong souls, have courageous hearts. Rise above love of self, and if the opportunity offer, shrink not even from heroic acts of virtue. When people try to wash themselves by wetting just their finger tips, hardly touching themselves with the sponge, they never wash thoroughly.

“If people want to learn how to swim they must throw themselves at once headlong into the water, not bit by bit. The more we do violence to ourselves the more will God reward us. Saints who felt the greatest natural repugnance to being with the sick have been seen to kiss the most loathsome wounds, and do gladly that which once gave them the greatest horror. Others have overcome temptations and recovered peace of soul by rolling among thorns.

“Mother de Chantal was for a very long time subject to very dangerous temptations against the faith, and in her moments of most difficult intellectual perplexity she forced herself to do very extraordinary things. One day, for instance, she wrote on her bosom, over her heart, with a red-hot iron the Names of Jesus and Mary.

“We have then examples to show that there are no temptations we cannot resist if our wills be firm and the grace of the Lord support us. But I add, Do no acts of mortification of this kind without leave.

“Do not lose courage, my children; do not let yourselves imagine you would save your souls more easily in the world; on the contrary, be convinced that in that turmoil you would meet with more serious dangers, and would be very unhappy. Do not be like that novice of whom we read in the history of the Fathers of the Desert, who, being weary of spiritual aridity and troubles, said to himself, ‘I’ll go back to the world since I am so weary of the practices of the religious life.’

“It was God’s will to correct this poor novice in a singular manner. He allowed the demon to visit him, armed with a huge stick mounted with iron, with which he gave him three great blows, saying to him, ‘This is how I treat those who are in my service.’

“No one can taste the happiness of the religious life except at the cost of some sacrifice. A young novice endured for a long time a kind of martyrdom because she could not accustom herself to silence. Another religious, belonging to a very austere Order, had such an invincible repugnance to sweeping that she let the broom fall every time she touched it, yet she did herself such violence that, though this happened over and over again, she would pick it up as often as she let it fall, saying each time, ‘My God, help me! I would rather die than not do

Thy Will.' For years this religious lived without spiritual consolation, and yet all the time, while she thought she felt nothing but disgust for her vocation, she made it so attractive to those with whom she had to deal that she taught them to love it. Expect trials, my dear daughters; it may truly be said that he who has never known temptation knows nothing of the spiritual life. 'There is,' says St. Gregory, 'the demon of the morning, the demon of mid-day, the demon of evening:' that is to say, the demon tempts us at the beginning, middle, and end of our religious life, and of our good works. He tempts novices, he tempts young professed, he tempts old religious. He tempts novices cunningly and unceasingly, for he thinks if he can but succeed he has gained everything by wiling a soul away from its vocation at the outset of its religious career. He tempts old religious, because he thinks his prey may easily escape him. He tempts those who are midway in their career least, because he thinks he has time before him, and counts on the natural inconstancy of the human mind."

Trials and time only increased the affection of the servant of God for her Community. Her flock, increasing every day, was ever calling for a wider range of her solicitude. But in spite of this she never relaxed in her delicate attention to her daughters at Angers, and to the Novitiate especially, that centre whence the whole Order was to be impregnated with the religious spirit peculiar to the Good Shepherd.

She did all she could to enliven the Novitiate feasts, and to fix the remembrance of them in the hearts of those taking part in them. On the 6th January 1867, an unusually large number of Sisters were professed, and she sent the Cardinal Protector a list of all their names, an attention which pleased him and drew from him the expression of his thanks.

Her words seemed now to gain perceptibly in unction and the power of moving hearts: "My dear daughters," she said to the young professed Sisters, "one notices how often shepherdesses are spoken of in old legends; this is because of their simplicity. Our Lord chose shepherds to be first called to the crib, then showed the Wise Men a star to guide them to Himself. You, too, my children, have been called by a star; you have followed it and have stayed where it led you. I shall be quite content if you always remain as candid as you are now; and this you will do if you will only try to be very simple and straightforward, like those good shepherds of Bethlehem."

A few days later, some newly professed Irish Sisters were to leave for Melbourne. These words were her parting exhortation, her loving farewell to them: "My dear daughters, I may well address you in the words of St. Paul, 'You are my joy and my crown.' And what crown more beautiful than a crown of young religious going out to all the ends of the world to save souls? I remember having read in one of the Melbourne Community letters that many young girls who went out to that colony to seek their fortunes

have gained nothing, but have lost their souls. Well, my children, it is for you to go out and save them. These are sacrifices men cannot understand, but the angels see them."

The missionary Sisters crossed the ocean in a ship called the *Chariot of Fame*, passing through storms and winds to conquer souls. The voyage lasted long, heavy snowstorms were succeeded by tropical heat, the hurricanes of the Cape of Good Hope by the dead calm of the Torrid Zone. The Archbishop of Sydney, Dr. Polding, was on board the same ship, and supported and encouraged them. He had travelled round the world four times, and told the Sisters many edifying anecdotes of his missionary work from a store that seemed inexhaustible. The Sisters in return told him all about the foundation of the Good Shepherd, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, of course, entering largely into all their accounts. Dr. Polding himself was so full of energy and of joyous indefatigable charity, that he reminded them of their Mother Foundress, and made them feel almost as if she herself were with them.

CHAPTER XXX

HER ILLNESS AND DEATH

1867

Illness of Mother Pelletier—Her love of the Rule—Foundation at Belfast—Eighteenth centenary of St. Peter—Last trials—Her devotion and patience in her sufferings—The Holy Viaticum—Her death.

SICKNESS is a great trial to ordinary souls, because it deprives them of the energy and power of applying to good works; but to Mother Pelletier it was but another occasion where the light of her faith and piety shone before others, and also it drew her closer to God and to His Blessed Mother.

In May 1867, while in bed for several days with severe inflammation of the lungs, she greatly edified the whole Community, for she was not merely patient under her sufferings, but showed the most perfect resignation to the holy will of God.

One day, after drinking some water of La Salette, having promised our Blessed Lady to recite her Litanies for a novena, she fell into a kind of stupor. Upon awaking from this state, she said to her daughters, "My mind was full of all the crosses laid upon us at this time, and I thought I saw the Congregation surrounded by an immense net, which was broken in

many places. I was greatly troubled, but the Blessed Virgin said to me, 'If you try to arrange matters I will leave you to yourself. I desire to settle everything for you!'"

She often received the favour of such intimate communications from our Blessed Lady, whom she had established as Superior over her convent. Just as she was on the point of renewing her vows in 1857, she heard this good Mother say, "Well, my poor little slave, do you want to bind yourself once more?"

"Oh yes," she answered, "but what will you give me, Blessed Mother?"

"I will give you labours, souls, and crosses."

Like another St. Teresa, these celestial communications had the effect of ever increasing her courage, and even of helping her to conquer her bodily weakness. Remembering the precarious state of her health during the greater portion of her life, it seems hardly credible that she should have borne such great fatigues and journeys. But in these heavenly communications, of which we find such frequent mention in her letters and her instructions, lay the inexhaustible source of all her strength.

Worn out at length by age and suffering, travelling was no longer possible, yet she still directed her convent. In 1861 the delicate state of her chest had kept her confined to her room for some months, yet she still superintended everything that went on in and outside the convent—the masons at their build-

ing, the religious going and coming from the classes ; and as in health, so now in sickness, she looked well to the good order of her house, and encouraged her subjects by word and gesture. Her chief privation was to be unable to attend the choir for the Community exercises. On the feast of the Ascension and the two following days, so that she might receive Holy Communion fasting, it was given to her at five o'clock in the morning. For several consecutive days after this, in order to prove how far her strength would go, she came down to the Novitiate, where an altar had been prepared, and there received Holy Communion, surrounded by her daughters holding lighted candles. After this she was able once more to get to the choir in the morning.

One day while the Sisters were at dinner she made her way down to the Community-room, where to their surprise and delight they found her waiting to welcome them with those gracious words of which she possessed so unlimited a store : "My heart yearned for a sight of you, my dear daughters. The doctor has given me leave to speak only five words, so I thank you, am very grateful for all your prayers, for all your care of me, and I love you with all my heart."

A few days after that the servant of God rose at 4.30 and resumed the usual course of Community life. The first in choir, she was a model of regularity to all her daughters, continuing to give them that example of solid virtue which avoids exceptions, and steadily

continues in the humble round of daily duty. Illness never so overpowered her that she forgot to be grateful, or to show pleasing little attentions to those who loved the Good Shepherd. The Constitutions had been lately reprinted, and while still confined to her room she had a copy of them specially prepared under her own supervision to send to the Cardinal Protector. Every copy bore his arms, and the volume sent him had also his initials on the outside, and his name engraved in gold inside; it was bound in red morocco and had a silver clasp.

Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia petitioned the Provincial of the Passionists, who was going to Rome to attend the canonisation of St. Paul of the Cross, to be the bearer of this gift. A few months later, when having the Community Breviaries reprinted at the Propaganda Press, she had the arms both of Pius IX. and Cardinal Patrizi printed on the first page.

She had a happy ingenuity in providing pleasures for her daughters, or in exciting their zeal, sometimes even their legitimate curiosity. On the feast of Pentecost, 1867, at the mid-day recreation she said, "I have a great joy to announce to you. But first of all I must ask you three questions—

"Do you love souls?"—"Yes, dear Mother!"

"Do you love the Institute?"—"Yes, dear Mother!"

"Do you love the foundations?"—"Yes, dear Mother!"

After these questions she told them that a new foundation was to be made; it was to be at Belfast, in

Ireland. The Bishop, Dr. Dorian, had asked for it to relieve the Sisters of Mercy, who were greatly overworked. It was destined, like other Irish foundations, to give the servant of God many consolations. The staunch faith of the Irish, their zeal for souls, made them welcome the work of the Good Shepherd with grateful piety.

The following occurrence took place in an Irish town where the Order was established. Penitents were slow in coming to the Sisters, and a priest, one of the assistant-clergy of a certain parish, groaned in spirit over this sad fact, and also because he knew not how to reach these poor sinners by his preaching. Fired with zeal for their salvation, a bold design suddenly occurred to him, and he determined to lose no time in putting it into execution. It was evening, and he was in his confessional, which he left abruptly, and still wearing surplice and stole, his rosary and Breviary in his hand, went straight to a street in which there were many houses inhabited by bad characters. Kneeling down on the pavement he began to say his beads aloud. Gradually the passers-by gathered round him, and some joined him in praying. All night long he continued, but the women only shut their windows, that they might not hear the prayers to the Blessed Virgin.

As morning dawned, however, and they began to open their windows, amazed at finding him still there, still praying, some, touched by remorse, came down into the street and began to say the rosary with com-

punction. One, more hardened than the rest, insulted them. Taking a bottle, she proposed drinking to their healths; by some accident the bottle broke in her hands and cut her badly, whereupon, taking this for God's judgment, she too came down and began also to pray.

The women now formed a procession and refused to part from the good Father unless he would take them to the convent. He therefore sent for closed carriages and took twenty away, whom he handed over to the Mother Superior with these words, "Rejoice with me, because I have found my sheep that were lost." Then he added, "Other sheep I have that are not of this fold; them also must I bring."

This wonderful example had such an effect that for several days afterwards penitents to the number of fifty kept constantly arriving at the convent, to whom the penitents already there gave up their beds and best clothes. For Mother Superior, taken by surprise as she was, opened her doors to all who came, without pausing to calculate the amount of accommodation, trusting in these words spoken by Mother Foundress: "Angels will come to widen out the walls of your folds, to make room for our dear penitents. The angels that ministered to our Lord will come and help you to feed them."

This story was made widely known in newspapers, and such great admiration for the priest was felt that his clerical brethren subscribed to give him a chalice as a memorial gift.

A few days after the foundation of Belfast, Mother Pelletier caused the feast of St. Peter to be celebrated with quite unusual solemnity in her monastery, in honour of the 18th Centenary of the Prince of the Apostles. Every feast celebrated in Rome always awoke a corresponding echo of love and devotion in the heart of the servant of God.

It was her delight at that time to give her daughters at recreation all the interesting news she received from Rome or elsewhere, as from Cairo and Suez, for instance, where missionary Bishops on their way to the Eternal City stopped and were hospitably entertained.

"Our house at Cairo is like Jacob's well," said she; "it is placed by the road-side, so that travellers may refresh themselves."

On St. Peter's feast she prepared a pleasant surprise for the Community. On a table in the middle of the refectory was placed a fine portrait of Pius IX., framed in flowers. She stood near it, and, a smile on her lips, drew her daughters' attention to the picture. The Novena closed that day, and after the last *Pater* and *Ave* she added the invocation, "St. Germaine, pray for us." The special reason for this prayer was the canonisation of this much-honoured Patron Saint of the Order, which was that day to be promulgated in Rome by the Pope.

Mother Pelletier's devotion became more expansive as her time here grew shorter. "My daughters," she used to say, "I never feel well except at Holy Communion and when with you all."

On the feast of Corpus Christi, the procession from the parish of St. James generally visited the exterior church of the monastery, but this year the usual decorations did not satisfy the Mother's devotion. They were to be more beautiful than hitherto, and not restricted to the enclosure. For a fortnight beforehand preparations were constantly discussed, and every day at recreation the mother looked at the wreaths of flowers that were to be used in ornamenting the street.

The day after the canonisation of St. Germaine she ordered a procession to be made by the Community in the Saint's honour. It started from an altar temporarily erected in the bakehouse, and was closed by the Sisters employed there, who carried the Saint's relics on their shoulders, preceded by the Community singing hymns. The servant of God kept a vivid remembrance of the favours granted to the Institute through the intercession of the saintly Shepherdess of Pibrac.

These were days when Divine favours poured on the Institute. On the 18th June two Chilian religious from the convent at Santiago, Mother Prioress, Mary of St. Augustine Fernandez, and her sister, still a novice, arrived at the Mother House. Their cousin, the chaplain of the Santiago monastery, accompanied them. They were received with the greatest joy by Mother General, who from the very first seemed to feel she was in presence of one to whose intrepidity the Good Shepherd would be largely indebted

for its extension over South America. "Like the Royal Prophet, I might cry out, 'My heart has uttered a good word.' And I add, To God, to our Blessed Lady, to St. Joseph I address my hymns of praise."

Such an impression of the sanctity of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia was made on the Mother St. Augustine that time never effaced it. From henceforth she, whom Mother Pelletier named the "Benjamin" among her daughters, always looked upon her venerated foundress as wearing the aureole of the Saints.

On the 2nd July Mother General, in one of her instructions to the Community, said, "Our Blessed Lady is visiting all our monasteries to-day. It seldom happens that a feast such as this passes without my having to tell you of some new grace. This year it is the foundation of a house in Vienna."

A society of charitable Viennese ladies had bought a house for this foundation in the *Margarethen* quarter, and religious being sent there, the Mother Superior from Neudorf came to superintend their installation.

The feast of St. Ignatius, which was both the anniversary of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's birth and of the foundation at Angers, was celebrated in 1867 with more than usual solemnity. Many of the Superiors of foreign houses came for it, bringing with them gifts of the handiwork of their Communities. "The daughters of Tyre," said Mother Pelletier, "the kings of Saba and the islands bring me gifts."

She liked, while this feast was being celebrated, to recall episodes of the early days of the Institute, and

this year her reminiscences were more than usually touching. "When the Curé of the cathedral first came to Tours to propose a foundation at Angers, I remember I was so happy that I thought I was in heaven. When I recall how we began, I say our foundations ought never to be discouraged. It was poverty, the most utter, the most absolute. And the greater the poverty, the crosses, and humiliations our monasteries meet with, the more sure will they be to receive graces. I love that saying, 'Grace is a fruit of the Cross.'"

In point of fact by far the greater number of the convents of the Good Shepherd have been founded in that holy poverty which signalised the beginning of the Institute.

The feast of our Lady's Nativity, which under the episcopate of St. Maurillus first took its rise in Anjou, and is still known there as *Notre Dame l'Angevine* (Our Lady, the Lady of Anjou), was always kept by the religious of the Good Shepherd as the feast of their Mother General. In 1867 the fiftieth anniversary of her religious profession was celebrated on this feast, truly as a golden wedding, through the zeal and piety of her daughters, and the good taste with which they decorated the monastery. The day began with a clothing and profession, followed by festivities in the Mother's honour. Occupied, as usual, in seeking the glory of God, Mother Pelletier had prepared for the feast a statue of our Lady of La Salette, which was now ready to be set up in the

convent. Following this pious example, like a faithful disciple, the Prioress of Santiago had also procured a statue, the statue of the Sacred Heart, in commemoration of her Sister's profession. On the feast day both statues were blessed and surrounded with flowers and lights all day, while at intervals the different classes came in turns to visit them, and honour together their Mother in heaven with her from whom on earth they received truly a Mother's care.

As a little memorial of the occasion, Mother St. Augustine of Santiago sent to every house of the Order, in remembrance of the golden jubilee, a bouquet made of the flowers which had decorated Mother Foundress' stall throughout the day. Her offering to Mother Foundress herself was the Spanish translation of the Magdalens' rule. It was dedicated to her in these words, "How many spouses have you not offered to the Divine Shepherd? How many stray sheep have you not brought back into the fold? How many among them have you not led along the path of perfection by having instituted the monasteries of the Sisters of St. Magdalen, by having given them a guide to heaven in the beautiful rule we offer you to-day, translated into St. Teresa's mother tongue?"

While these festivities were going on, a visit was paid to the Good Shepherd by the Marquis d'Ogavan, a relative of the Prioress of Santiago. This gentleman was Queen Isabella's Chamberlain and Spanish ambassador. He brought his wife and daughter with

him. Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia received these guests with all her usual generous hospitality, and obtained leave for them to visit the enclosure. The ambassador was so delighted with all he saw, that, on his return to Paris, he sent her a large donation, saying he rejoiced to have seen one "who had spread her charity broadcast over the world by her heroic constancy."

Her courage in supporting all the fatigues of these feast days had indeed been nothing short of heroic, for her health was steadily failing. She had often now to stay in her room, but kept the window open that she might hear the voices of the religious or the children when they sang hymns before our Lady's statue. Sickness deprived her of none of the joyous elasticity of her character. Her sufferings were a trial only to herself—no one else was called upon to share them. Her long experience of mental suffering had taught her to bear the cross of her Divine Lord without a murmur. The trials she found hardest to bear were those of threatened danger to any of her foundations; and at this time the impious war against the Holy Father endangered more than one of her Italian convents. She often wrote to them begging for frequent news, so that she might be able to follow both the general course of events and know how they affected her daughters.

Other letters there were also which she anxiously expected, for the Prioress of Santiago had now departed for Chili, taking with her five auxiliary Sisters,

some of whom were newly professed. At last the longed-for news arrived in a letter dated from St. Vincent's Bay. It was read aloud to the Community, that all might share their Mother's joy at receiving it.

Her thoughts at this time constantly reverted to Rome and Italy, and to the Holy Father attacked in his temporal power. The finances of the Mother House happened to be exceptionally straitened this year, but the Mother resolved nevertheless to make a supreme effort to send a larger offering than ever before of Peter's Pence; it amounted to 3000 francs, and was sent in the name of the Community.

Her deep and pious interest in those who were defending the Holy Father in his rights was shown by her having the Office for the Dead recited in her chapel for the souls of the Pontifical Zouaves who fell in the heroic struggle at Mentana. Among them was Bernard de Quatrebarbes, one of M. de Neuville's nephews, for whose soul Mother Foundress caused very special prayers to be offered by the Community. Here there was a peculiar tie of personal gratitude, but where nothing of the kind existed, every sorrow of the Church, every grief of those who served the Church awoke an echo in her responsive heart.

In this year (1867) she had the joy of offering hospitality to a number of foreign Bishops, who, returning from the Centenary festivities at Rome, stopped at Angers to consult her about the convents of the Good Shepherd in their dioceses, or about those they wished to found.

The house at Manchester was begun in this year by Dr. Turner. A few acres of land were bought later, at Victoria Park, with some money (20,000 francs) procured by means of a lottery, and here the Sisters set to work to build their convent, a proceeding which excited the somewhat indignant surprise of the rich people in the neighbourhood, when they learned it was to be exclusively a house of refuge for penitents. Becoming acquainted with the charitable work of the Sisters soon, however, allayed this feeling, and Anglicans brought donations, some even sent penitents. One rich Protestant brought at first three, then shortly afterwards five more girls. Altogether the house has from the first found favour in the densely populated city of Manchester, and has also been supported by the clergy. In 1886 it contained 112 penitents.

Since 1842 a convent of the Good Shepherd had existed at Lyons, in the old Château des Batières in the parish of St. Irenæus, but for a long time, aware of the religious spirit and generosity of this city, Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia had wished to establish a second foundation exclusively for penitents. A house suitable for the work was found at Ecully, a parish which M. Vianney, the Curé d'Ars, had at one time served as curate. He was consulted about the undertaking, and gave this answer, "It would be well to open a house for penitents, it would be a work pleasing to God."

The convent was opened March 13th, feast of St.

Euphrasia, 1867, under the patronage of Cardinal Bonald, and placed under the protection of St. Joseph, on whose feast (March 19th) the first Mass was said.

Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's Order, modelled on her own character, courageous and enterprising, suited the American nature, and rarely did a year pass without her being solicited to make some new foundation in America. In 1867 Boston asked for one, and gratefully welcomed religious from New York. The founder of this house was Dr. Williams.

Catholics are both numerous and zealous in good works at Boston, and the foundation was blessed from the very outset. The penitents number 200.

Never in the most flourishing days of the Institute had the servant of God been busier in directing the works of her daughters than this year. They were everywhere in request, and in two cases, at Philadelphia and at Namur, were wanted in two different parts of the same place, to meet which necessity the existing convents had to be subdivided into separate establishments.

At Philadelphia the Bishop, Dr. Wood, wanted the Sisters to take charge of an industrial school which the Sisters of the Holy Cross had just given up. It stood on the banks of the river, at Schuzhill, and in a few years became very prosperous.

At Namur the work offered was the charge of orphans whose parents had died of cholera. Baroness de Mereu de Corhais had bought a house which she was anxious to convert into a home for these children,

as a kind of adjunct to the convent of the Good Shepherd.

To all appearance, therefore, the latter years of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia's life were brilliantly successful. Foundations rose about her as by miracle. Her daughters surrounded her with their love and respect.

But the hostility of her adversaries was still far from being disarmed. In 1866 the Pope had received a long memorial, in which she was accused of being unable to tolerate the authority of her ecclesiastical superiors, and on the other hand of exercising "tyrannical rule over her community, and of being also proud and hypocritical." Powers were demanded for an Apostolic visitor, who would be empowered to examine every member of the Community. But, in order to leave the religious really free to speak, it was necessary, the memorial alleged, to remove Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia for four months from the convent.

Her whole administration was thus represented as a government of terror, her conduct a series of hypocritical actions.

These accusations lacked the element of credibility. Was it to be believed that, by means of fear, a Superior had for forty years kept religious, to the number of thousands, and scattered over all the world, obedient to her? Fear of such an extraordinary kind would have been like the spell of some enchantment. Would not complaints from religious far from

the Mother House have poured in at Rome against the oppression to which their Novitiate had been subject?

How was it that Mother Pelletier's pride and hypocrisy were apparent only to those hostile to her outside her convent, and were hidden from those living in it? Such faults are noticeable in the daily routine of life—they are not like crimes occurring at distant intervals, and easily escaping the knowledge of those living with the culprit. The proud hypocrite has certain habitual tendencies which betray themselves in his speech and actions, and, despite himself, affect those about him.

The Pope, therefore, was not misled by such accusations. He replied through the Cardinal Protector that no complaints of the Mother General had reached him; that the religious in all the monasteries loved their foundress, and refused to authorise her temporary removal from the monastery—a proceeding evidently both unjust and severe.

Worn out with the unceasing labours of fifty years, in 1868 the strength of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia began rapidly to fail. On her feast day, March 13th, she was present for the last time in the refectory at the Community dinner. She could not walk, but was taken in a wheel-chair to visit all the shrines in the garden, each dear to her, but especially the Calvary and the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception. "I must pay my visit to our Lady on foot," she said, and got out of her little carriage. Having

finished her prayers, she visited the statues of St. Euphrasia, her own patroness; of St. Geneviève, patroness of Mme. d'Andigné, the benefactress of the work; and of St. Joseph. "St. Joseph," she said to him, "royal-hearted saint, great protector of the work of the Good Shepherd, pray to Jesus and Mary for us."

On the 29th March, Passion Sunday, she rose at five o'clock, and went to the chapel fasting to receive Holy Communion at the grating. During the day she came to the Community-room. "Do not prevent me from going," she said; "my only pleasure is to be among my daughters." She had always greatly insisted on recreation in common. She felt this was the last time she should be present at it with her Community gathered about her. On returning to her own room she said, "Oh, my Jesus, have I seen my daughters for the last time? Thy will be done."

That evening the doctor declared that she was suffering from an organic malady of the stomach, and her condition was most serious. Her nephew, Dr. Pelletier, who was summoned, gave the same opinion, which had already excited the greatest consternation in the monastery.

On Wednesday, April 1st, she was again able to receive Holy Communion fasting. It was brought to her at 5 A.M. Later in the day she attended to some business matters connected with the foundations, and gave the names of Sisters who were to go to Aden, India, and other places.

On Friday, feast of the Compassion of the Blessed Virgin, she received Holy Communion as Viaticum. Her sufferings throughout the day were very great, and she was heard repeatedly to say, "My God, Thy Will be done; My God, I desire nothing but Thy Holy Will."

Feeling worse next day, she asked for the last Sacraments. The Community were gathered round the door of her room, and she wanted to see them all. "Come in, my children," she said; "come in, all of you." When our Lord was brought into her cell, she begged the Community to forgive her as she forgave all who might ever have offended her. Only the sound of her daughters' sobs was heard, but she continued: "I die the daughter of the Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Church." She made the responses to the chaplain's prayers, who, hardly able to speak from emotion, said to her, "Behold your King who comes to you in His meekness." After she had received the Blessed Sacrament she closed her eyes, and for a long time lay motionless, making her thanksgiving. Then, once more, she recommended to her daughters union and fidelity to the Institute.

"Oh, dear Institute," she said, "love it very much! Promise me you will always support it."—"We promise," her daughters answered. Then she spoke once more to them: "Take great care of our dear penitents, of our poor children."

A little while after this she asked that letters might be written to all the foundations, and mentioned most

of them by name, then raising her trembling hands, she said, "Tell, my dear daughters, that I bless them tenderly, that not one is forgotten."

The next day was Palm Sunday. She asked for her palm, and held it a long time in her hand. In the course of the day a telegram came from Cardinal Patrizi, sending her the Pope's blessing. She had the paper put under the group of the Holy Family in her room where she had so often prayed. At six in the evening the Bishop of Angers came to see her.

After this, for several days, the Superioresses from different convents kept arriving. For one and all she had the same recommendation, the Institute: "Let nothing ever detach you from it. It is the source of life for all your works. I want this to be repeated to all our monasteries in whatever country they are."

She asked to have all letters read to her that came from those Prioresses who could not attend in person, and also that none of their letters might be destroyed.

The children of the Good Shepherd were meantime all praying for her with the utmost fervour, and their conduct was excellent. The thought of her seemed to keep all hearts raised to God.

The Magdalens had Masses said for her at the Sta. Baume. "Oh," she said, speaking of them, "my good Magdalens! I may say truly I am their foundress. St. Magdalen has always come to my assistance;" then humbly, "she is my patroness."

The whole of Holy Week was a time of suffering, but showed her daughters, better even than they had ever before known, what was the extent of her heroic patience. She united herself to all the prayers of Holy Week, and recommended great exactitude in following the rules laid down for singing the Offices in choir.

In Easter week a letter came from Cardinal Patrizi to Sister Assistant, containing the assurance of his prayers for Mother Foundress; this gave her the greatest pleasure. "I am glad," he wrote, "that the Holy Father's blessing has been a comfort to your invalid; tell her, please, that both the Pope and I pray continually for her."

To one whose whole life had been animated, as had hers, by attachment to the Vicar of Christ and Holy Church, it was an unspeakable consolation to receive this assurance that the Pope's blessing rested on her last hours; those also that she received from the Archbishops of Cambrai, Aix, and Westminster, from the Bishops of Orleans, Arras, Poitiers, and many other places, greatly consoled her.

No suffering altered her patience. "I wish not to commit a single imperfection during this illness," she said. Some one pitied her because she could not drink anything but water: "St. Francis Xavier had not good fresh water like this to drink when he was on the sea-shore," she said.

Her mind remained perfectly clear, and in the midst of her sufferings was constantly dwelling on

Holy Scripture, just as when she was well. "Ah!" she said once to a Mother who stood by her, "I recognise the voice of my Jacob."

She frequently made pious aspirations, such as, "My God, Thou art my all;" "Oh, my Jesus, be Thou the breath of my life;" "Oh, Jesus, be my strength; I have no strength but in Thee;" "I try to press the will of God to my heart;" "I bear in me the stigmata of Jesus Christ;" "Suffering hast Thou offered me, and I have accepted it;" "He hath bruised me with twofold bruising." "I have been covered with wounds, but my wounds have restored me to life. My heart is in an ocean of peace; my God dwells in me and suffers with me."

In various ways she showed that her own sufferings never made her forget the Community. When she heard the bell, she made a sign to the Sisters in attendance to leave her and take part in the exercise announced. One morning, after a very windy night, she sent a Sister out into the garden to see if there had been any damage done, or any trees blown down. Another day she had some hundreds of francs done up in different small parcels, to be distributed among certain of her monasteries which she knew to be in need.

On the 20th and 21st April she was able to receive Holy Communion. Those about her heard her talking to herself; her eyes were raised upwards as she spoke: "Oh, how lovely heaven is! I see our Lord in the midst of His elect! I feel our Lady there,

too, near me. If I can reach the place she has shown me, I shall find the Lord of Peace. I hope God will show me mercy because of our fourth vow. My dear daughters, I leave the Institute in your hands; you will sustain it."

On the 22nd she was not able to receive Holy Communion in the morning; the Holy Viaticum was, therefore, brought to her in the afternoon. It was her last Communion.

That evening some of the Sisters from England arrived. "Come, my beloved daughters," she said, "come. Love is stronger than death. God has preserved my life that I may once more have the consolation of blessing you and pressing you to my heart."

Her last words were for the missionary Sisters she had sent forth to carry the Gospel to Africa, some to Oran, and others to Aden.

"It is with my last breath that I send you a Superior for our monastery at Miserghin," she told her daughters to write to Mgr. Callot, the Bishop of Oran. She had just been speaking a few words to each of those going to Aden, blessed them, and was asking for other Sisters whom she wished to see, when suddenly she felt the end had come: "Farewell, farewell, farewell, my daughters, farewell to the Institute!" They were her last words before she appeared in presence of that Divine Master whom for more than fifty years she had served so faithfully, confiding in the words: "Come, spouse of Jesus Christ, receive the

crown the Lord has prepared for thee from all eternity."

The news of her death was received with an outburst of grief in all the convents of the Order. From Angers to India all her daughters with one voice dwelt on the merits, the immense charity of the valiant, holy woman by whom the Institute of the Good Shepherd had been founded.

From outside, too, the most touching condolence arrived. Seculars who had been brought in contact with her were untiring in their praises of her gracious manner, of her devotedness, her gentleness in dealing with all the rich as well as the poor and the humble. The Prefect of Maine-et-Loire and the Prefect of Nantes wrote touching letters about her. Religious men who had known her mingled their tears with those of her daughters in religion, and called her "an incomparable religious, a peerless woman." Women of the world who had been in the habit of seeing her, spoke of her death as a personal bereavement, and said that in her they had found unbounded holiness and charity. The Countess de Quatrebarbes told the Sisters she mourned with them that "incomparable Mother who had honoured her for thirty-eight years with her affection."

The Mayor of Angers showed his respect by authorising the interment of the holy remains in the chapel within the enclosure. Though on earth there was mourning and sorrow, rather let our minds dwell on heaven, where, among the thousands of her daughters

who owe to her their training in religious life, among the myriads of her other children, the penitents and the Magdalens, whom her love once sheltered, whom her ministry sanctified, the servant of God still presides over her flocks in the celestial Fold of Jesus, the Good Shepherd.

THE END

PASQUIER, H.

Life of Mother Mary of
St. Euphrasia Pelletier.

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